

# HISTORICAL ALBUM



and Centennial Book

# **TUFFY'S**

## **PET FOODS**



WE THANK PERHAM FOR 25 YEARS OF PATRONAGE  
AND COOPERATION TO HELP US GROW!

COVER DESIGN BY CAROL FISTLER

Dorothy Kading  
Vergas, MN.



THIS TABLET IS PLACED HERE TO COMMEMORATE THE ARRIVAL OF THE NORTHERN PACIFIC RAILWAY AT PERHAM SEPTEMBER 30, 1871. THE FIRST RAILROAD TO ENTER OTTER TAIL COUNTY, MINNESOTA.

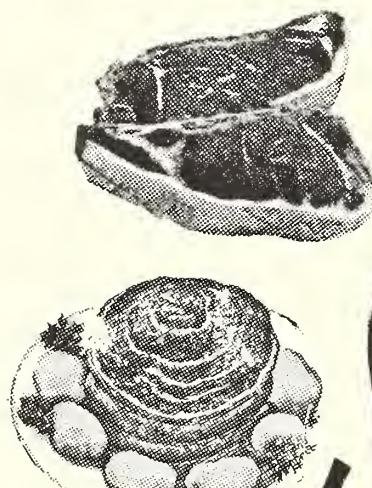
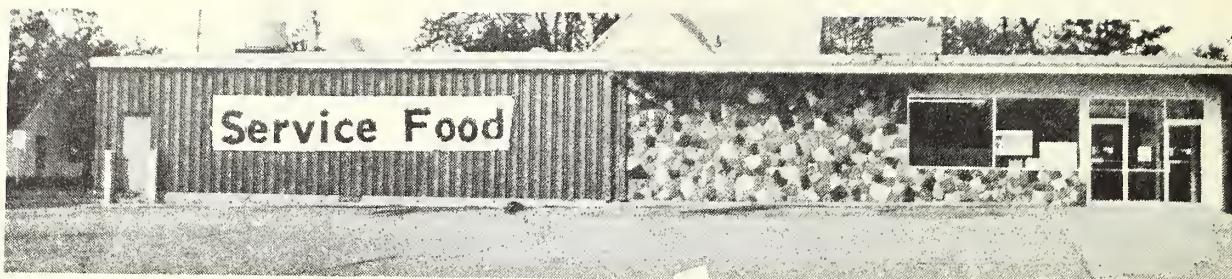
Dedicated By The  
Otter Tail County Historical Society  
June 28, 1931

#### PERHAM NAMED AFTER JOSEPH PERHAM

Perham is the namesake of Joseph Perham of New York, the first man to conceive the idea of building a railroad from Lake Superior to the Pacific coast. Perham was a wealthy man, but lost all of his money and property in an attempt to complete his idea and plan during the span of his life. Fate frowned, however, and Perham died before the completion of the great work which he fathered. He fought obstacles of every description. Congress opposed him and capitalists of New York and Philadelphia called him insane for ever conceiving or entertaining such a stupendous undertaking. He did not fight in vain. Although he never lived to see it, his dream was fulfilled. Perham pays tribute to the spirit and courage of the man whose cognomen it bears — Joseph Perham.

#### PERHAM TOWNSHIP

PERHAM township, organized March 19, 1872, was then called Marion Lake township, for the lake adjoining its southwest corner; but March 1, 1877, it was renamed, to be like its village, by an act of the legislature. Josiah Perham, commemorated in this name, was the first president of the Northern Pacific railroad company, in 1864-65. He was born in Wilton, Maine, in 1803, and died in Boston, Mass., in 1868. Very interesting biographic notes, with narration of his enthusiastic efforts for construction of this transcontinental railway line, are given in Eugene V. Smalley's "History of the Northern Pacific Railroad" (1883, chapters XI-XV, pp. 97-132). Perham village, platted March 6, 1873, on this railroad, was incorporated February 14, 1881.



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# EARLY DAYS IN PERHAM

To give the public a correct idea of Perham's history from its origin, it will be necessary to go back as far as the year 1866, when Rush Lake was first settled by a German Colony, from Mercer County, Ohio. This colony was headed by Rev. Joseph Albrecht. Among the early settlers, who arrived at that time are: Ferdinand Boedigheimer, Leander Boedigheimer, Frank Boedigheimer, William Boedigheimer and Mrs. Jiachim Doll.

From this settlement other hardy settlers pushed farther into the wilderness, but in 1869, two years prior to the construction of the Northern Pacific Railway through Perham, the large prairie on which the Village of Perham is now situated, contained only two families of settlers; Fred Mohr and his sons John, Fred, Peter and Nick, who lived in a small cabin approximately one mile from where the Village of Perham was later built, and the family of John Rock, which consisted of his mother, Susan Rock, Mrs. John Frisch, and her daughter, Susan Frisch. Among the early settlers also were John Doll, Joseph Doll, Joseph Weis and W. A. Doll.

At the time the first settlers arrived, St. Cloud was the nearest railroad town. The trip was made with oxen, and took two weeks. Supplies were hauled from St. Cloud, then the only sizeable town northwest of St. Paul, and the entrepot of a vast unsettled region stretching westward to the mountains. The road travelled by the early settlers was the famous Red River Trail which crossed the prairie diagonally through the present site of the Village of Perham. It had been used for many years previous to the coming of the settlers as one of the main routes of the fur trade. Over it, in two-wheeled carts with wooden, ungreased axles drawn by oxen, moved the fur catches concentrated at Ft. Garry for transportation to St. Paul. Before it could change its character and become the highway of later advancing settlers, the railroad, crawling westward, ended its usefulness. The settlers, breaking up the new land, first found outlet for their produce to new settlers passing through to settle at Oak Lake, Detroit, and other points; then to the railroad contractors to feed their hungry gangs and then through the rails to the broader and more substantial markets.

Coming with the opening of the country were the grist mills and the lumber mills. R. L. Frazee established a saw mill and flour mill at Otter Tail City, and lumbering furnished employment to many settlers. Cutting and sawing went on winter and summer, the lumber being sold green from the saw as fast as turned out, and sold at fabulous prices. In the winter he moved his mill to the southwest shore of Big Pine, and his lumber was sold as far west as Oak Lake beyond Detroit. At the same time a Mr. McCally, who operated a mill at Fr. Ambergcrombie, cut all of the best timber surrounding Big and Little Pine Lakes, floating it down the Otter Tail and Red River to the north. His first drive left here in 1869. Perham, in its early days, was the headquarters for logging operations on the Red River and after the Clark & McClure saw mill was destroyed by fire, large log drives were taken from Big Pine Lake to Winnipeg, Canada, requiring about four or five months to complete a drive.

About this time, Henry L. Kemper started a little store at Rush Lake, which was the first store to be operated in this locality. Henry Drahmann became a partner with Mr. Kemper, and after the railroad had reached Perham, the store was moved to Perham. It was later replaced by a large brick building, which is now owned

and operated as a mercantile store, by Vince and Leo Drahmann.

After the Northern Pacific was completed as far as Perham, the Company established a Station, and built a side track and named it Negonama. This station was on the same place where the former Village of Richdale existed. Kemper and Drahmann received the first goods that were brought here by rail. The goods were unloaded in a hazel brush, and a guard was placed over them, until they were taken away by the owner.

In 1872, while Henry Kemper was Postmaster at Rush Lake, he received a communication from the Postoffice Department, informing him that the establishment of a new Postoffice had been petitioned for, and to be located at the Northern Pacific Railroad crossing, of the Otter Tail River, where Messrs Clark and McClure were at that time, building their saw mill. Henry Kemper informed the Department that the location would not be the proper one, on the grounds that the Northern Pacific Railroad Company had already built a side track two miles west of the proposed Postoffice, and that a Townsite would soon be surveyed and platted, and that that would be the proper place for the Postoffice. At the same time, a petition was sent in, praying for the establishment of the Postoffice, and the appointment of Henry Kemper as Postmaster. The Petition was granted, the appointment made, and the Post-office in Perham established.

In June, 1872, Kemper and Drahmann erected the first wooden building in Perham, on the north side of the railroad track. It required two days to put up the building, and on the third day Henry Drahmann brought part of the firm's goods from their store at Rush Lake, put it on sale in the new building and thus the first mercantile business was established in Perham. A boot and shoe box was secured and supplied with pigeon holes to serve as Post-office equipment. This was in keeping with the Postmaster's salary which was then \$12.00 per year. There were two tents in Perham before the building was erected. One, owned by E. Curo, served as a hotel, and the other, owned by Richard Connely, served as a saloon.

At this time the telegraph office was moved from Negonama. A large dry-goods box was placed on the street near the track where the Marckel Store now stands. The telegraph instruments were placed on this box and Howard Wetmore, the first Station Agent, commenced operating with only an umbrella over his head to keep the sun off. The old station at Negonama was torn down, moved up here on cars, and again built west of the present railroad station tank.



Army Keerbs, Matt Paulson, and Otto Krueger with the Krueger Dray Line.

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Perham

At this time Joseph Schwab built a blacksmith shop, John Frisch, a butcher shop, and E. Curo moved up a building from Otter Tail City. All of the buildings were put on the north side of the track, and afterwards moved across to the south side.

In the month of July, 1872, the Superior and Puget Sound Company laid out the original townsite of Perham. After some difficulty with the agents for the Townsite Company, the settlers were given the privilege to choose lots where they wanted them, paying from \$200 to \$300 for each lot.

The Village of Perham was named after Mr. Perham of New York, the man who first conceived of the idea of building this great railroad from Lake Superior to the Pacific Coast.

The first car of wheat shipped from any point on the Northern Pacific was shipped by Kemper and Drahmann in the fall of 1872. Four carloads were the entire produce shipped that fall from a territory reaching as far as the Leaf Mountains and Fergus Falls. Perham soon developed into a wheat center, and flour was manufactured here which was shipped to Moorhead and from there by boat to Ft. Garry and other Canadian outposts.

In July 1874 the first newspaper was issued by Kemper Bros. and Drahmann. The paper bore the name of the "Perham News." X. S. Burk was the duly accredited Editor of the highly influential paper. The paper in its early history did not prosper and changed hands several times, until in late years L. E. Davidson purchased the paper and emerged with the Perham Bulletin.

In July 1887, A. E. Luedke erected the first solid brick



Ludger Berry Sawmill — 1890

building in Perham. The same is now occupied by Knuttila Implement Company, Inc., the successor to the Marckel Company Hardware Store.

In August 1899 Henry Kemper started the Exchange Bank of Perham, which finally a year later culminated into the Bank of Perham, owned by Walz, Weber, and Kemper and now known as the State Bank of Perham. Up until this time the merchants of Perham did their banking with the banks in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

On the 14th day of February 1881, the State Legislature passed a law authorizing the incorporating the Village of Perham and appointing Henry Drahmann, Louis Struett, and Samuel Caughey as Commissioners to conduct the first election to be held at the Village of Perham, and pursuant thereto an election was duly held on the 21st day of March following.

## FARMING IN THE OLD DAYS

### THRESHING DONE BY TRAMPLING CATTLE



Picture taken by Major M. J. Burelbach, Brother of John

When harvest time came in 1867 the settlers had not even the crudest of threshing implements. A place was smoothed off and the wheat bundles placed on it. Oxen were driven around and around, trampling the kernels from the chaff while the men threw in more bundles,

shook the straw with forks and threw the chaff to one side. Oats, which separates from the straw more easily was threshed by laying it across a floor of logs, spaced slightly apart, and striking the grain with a flail. The oats dropped off and the chaff either blew away on windy days or was removed with a fork when the day was calm.



Rush Lake Threshing Crew



Stack threshing on the T. J. Delaney farm. Anton W. Doll at the thresher about 1920.

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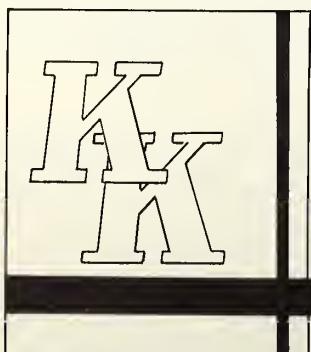
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Walt Shasky, Syl Wyborny, Jr., and Frank Shasky shocking grain.

## Short History of Perham's First Store

This general store was started in 1876 by Henry Kemper at Rush Lake. He moved it to Perham when the Northern Pacific Railroad came through Perham in 1871. He was joined in this business by J. B. Kemper, grandfather of Bill Kempfer, and Henry Drahmann, and they formed the firm of Kemper Bros. & Drahmann. Besides the store, they operated a grain elevator and the Toad River Flour Mill, six miles from Perham.

The first carload of wheat ever hauled by the Northern Pacific Railroad was shipped by this firm. The first shipment of merchandise that came into Perham was received by Kemper Bros. & Drahmann.

In 1881 the store was taken over by John B. Drahmann, who operated it until his death in 1907. At that time it was taken over by his sons Leo and Vincent Drahmann. They operated the store until October 1964 when they sold out the business after 97 years of continuous operation.

Leo Drahmann died in 1968. Vince is the sole surviving 2nd generation businessman in Perham in 1971, the 100th anniversary of the coming of the railroad.



Drahmann's Store—Vince, Annie, Henrietta and Leo Drahmann and Jos. Bernauer.



John Schornack and William Lachowitzer harvesting in 1916 in the Alzheimer farm.

## RUSH LAKE SCENE OF EARLY LOGGING DAYS

Rush Lake was the scene of earliest logging activities in the county. In the year 1869 a man by the name of McCally, then running a saw mill at Fort Abercrombie, made the first log drive down the Otter Tail river to Rush Lake.



Ludger Berry Sawmill, 1890. The original house still stands on Berry farm, now owned by Ellis E. Whitney.

These loggers were a rough, jolly, untamed outfit. They bought all four kinds of whiskey Kemper had on sale — which four brands, incidentally, came out of the same barrel. Their foreman came into the store one day after their arrival. "Do you handle tobacco?" he asked. When an affirmative answer was given, he said, without asking price or brand, "I'll take all of it." The lumberjack danced with calk boots, on the upper floor of the small store until the floor was worn through.

Otter Tail City, then being the county seat, had the first jail in the county. The only mistake made in furnishing the jail was that they placed a Bible in the cell, as we shall shortly see. One bitter cold morning Father Frank Staab called at the office of Henry Kemper, justice of the peace at Rush Lake, and brought with him a well dressed but feeble looking Irishman who made a complaint that he had been knocked down and robbed by a burly Swede.



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Three \$20 gold pieces, several \$5 gold pieces and some bills, in all about \$100, had been stolen from him. A warrant was issued for the apprehension of the thief. The warrant would make a good legal curiosity. Kemper had never seen a warrant but he did his best and here was the result:

"State of Minnesota, County of Otter Tail. To Mr. A. Anderson, Sheriff of Otter Tail County. Dear Sir: — A man has been knocked down and robbed by a big Swede man. Come and arrest him quick. Hurry up before he gets away.  
Henry Kemper, J.P."

A. Anderson was the first sheriff of Otter Tail County.

The big man was arrested, a preliminary hearing held and he was bound over to the district court for the

spring term. Failing to furnish bonds, he was locked in the new jail. Sheriff Anderson was a good man and tried to make a better man out of the prisoner. He furnished him with a big, old Bible. The prisoner made very good use of the Bible. He used it as a pry block, a piece of wood as a lever, pried the upper joists up, kicked out the boards of the gable end, jumped into the snow and "scrammed." Sheriff Anderson was again sent out to arrest the culprit, but when he arrived at Clitherall, where the Swede lived, the man's neighbors informed the sheriff that one arrest was enough for any one man, and to let the prisoner go. That settled the case.

Mr. Martin Fiedler of St. Joe was one of the original board of the county commissioners which met at Otter Tail City.

## PIONEERS



Henry Kemper



Mrs. Henry Kemper  
(Regina Steinbach)



Mr. and Mrs. Math Burelbach,  
Wedding 1884



Nick Burelbach,  
1916



Jacob Doll, one of the first pioneers to arrive from Ohio and settle in Rush Lake.



Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Doll about  
100 years ago



George Burelbach



Henry Schmidt Family. Left to right: Paul, Hulda, Richard, Arnold, Emma, Robert, Edwin and Walter



Mr. and Mrs. F. D. Sieling and Family in 1893



Bernard and Kathryn Kemper  
Nov. 9, 1909



John Oswald



Albert and Katherine Shasky on  
their wedding.



Bernard and Bill Kemper



Dr. Josiah S. Richardson



Kunniginda Alzheimer, 1843-1910



Mr. and Mrs. Jack Sawyer



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# Pelton Recalls Big Log Drive of Early Days

The following article is copied from "Memories" of the late E. A. Pelton, pioneer settler of Perham:

"I am now going to take you over to Perham where Clark and McClure had secured more than fifty million feet of standing pine in Otter Tail and Becker counties.

Wadena county was Mississippi logs and the balance was Red River. This was about the time the railroad got into Perham. Mr. Clark had built a large sawmill two miles east of Perham on the Red River of the North and a large boarding house and lumber yard. Across the track was a big brewery owned by Peter Schroeder of Perham.

Andrew McCrea, whose old home still stands in Winnebago Prairie, was general manager.

We began operations and built logging camps all around Pine Lake. These logs we would run down the Red River to the mill, shipping to Moorhead, then by the Red River to Winnipeg or Fort Gray with Tom Scott of St. Cloud as agent. We would raft this lumber in cribs about 300 feet long with a long oar on each end to guide them.

Now I will return to Perham. In the fall men would be coming back, some from the Black Hills, Montana, and Winnipeg where they were rafting lumber, others from government forts where they had been putting up hay for the government. All those working for Clark and McClure came back to engage in the logging business, which took thousands of men. I have in my possession government contracts signed by the Governor and N. P. Clark, for delivering a million pounds of beef and a hundred barrels of pork and a hundred tons of different kinds of feed to all the government agencies and reservations. This was hauled from St. Cloud before the railroad came, but Perham was the headquarters for logging and the Red River.

The lumberjacks were from all parts of the country. They were all husky men and their main fault was drinking beer and getting drunk. They would not carry guns or knives, they did not steal and would simply fight with their fists. I have seen several hundred men in Perham — pretty lively at times. If their money played out and they had no booze, they would go down the track and hide and steal a keg of Pete Schroeder's best. Mr. Schroeder had a brewery near the mill. They had a big boarding house on the river by the sawmill and the young folks from all over would come every Saturday night for a dance in the old boarding house.

We hauled logs from as far as ten miles north of Pine Lake, enclosed them with a boom. Then the logs all up and down the Toad river would be driven down into the



The old Cooper Shop located near the Globe Mill where barrels were made.

lake. About six million feet would cover about ten acres. We would then take them across the lake in the night when there was no wind. We had a large raft with a windlass, a sweep and a large anchor weighing 300 pounds tied to a rope 1,000 feet.

## E. H. PELTON ADDS INTERESTING SIDELIGHTS

An addition to our account of the early settlement was written for us by the late E. H. Pelton, pioneer settler of Perham. Mr. Pelton was interested in the logging business at that time and gave us some interesting material of the early logging days.

Mr. Pelton wrote:

In 1869 Ed Curo graded the N. P. railroad from the Otter Tail river to the present site of Perham. His wife boarded the railway engineers in a large tent across the railway track north of the present city hall. Next year he built the first hotel in Perham, known as the Curo House and headquarters for lumbermen, as Mr. Curo was a heavy contractor in ties and logs. That hotel was lately dismantled after standing there for 63 years. The Puget Sound and Town Site Company made its headquarters there when it was laying and platting the town site. It was represented by Mr. A. A. White of Brainerd. The stages at that time brought in from the west pemican smoked and dried buffalo meat.

The railroad arrived in Perham in June 1871. As soon as the railroad was completed to Moorhead, the Clark and McClure Mill was in operation. Most of this lumber was shipped to Ft. Garry as far as Moorhead by train, then rafted down the river. The first steamboat on the Red River was the Pluck hauled by Clark and McClure freight teams through Otter Tail City. Dan Bosworth from Long Prairie was foreman.

In 1873 Clark and McClure built a saw mill on the Otter Tail River two miles east of Perham. Their lumber office now is occupied by Mr. Miller as a jewelery store, hauled to its present site in Perham, over 50 years ago. Clark and McClure had secured over 80 million feet of standing pine in Otter Tail county; 60 million was manufactured in this saw mill. The balance was driven down the Red River of the North to Ft. Garry, now Winnipeg, as I will explain later.

In 1869 R. L. Frazee had built a sawmill near the present Frazee. Mr. Joseph Sartell, father of the Sartell brothers, lumbermen at Sartell, Minn., built the mill along the river and lumber was hauled to Perham. The Curo Hotel was supplied with building material from this mill before Clark's mill was completed. As time went on the great logging business north of Perham with its hundreds of men and hundreds of oxen getting out the logs for lumber for buildings expanded for the prairies were choked with covered wagons along the old Red River trail of which one branch passed near Perham; farmers with their dust covered oxen and wagons looking for homesteads.

The government had given every odd section of land as a grant to the railroad. Every even section was homestead land. By paying 14 dollars as filing fee to the government as cost of surveying you were entitled to a deed from the government by living on and cultivating this land for a period of five years.

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LEFT TO RIGHT:  
Marion Gill  
Mac Tobkin, Mgr.  
Lila Burgau  
Pat Johnsen  
Edgar Rasen

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# **YOUR ONE STOP FARM SERVICE CENTER**



About 1876 the Pelton family arrived in Perham, Albert, Ernest, Laforest, Willis, Tellie. Albert became a heavy logging contractor and over the 30 million feet of logs in to Ft. Garry. I will explain later. About that time the writer bought 80 acres of land adjoining the little cemetery a mile east of Perham, built a house, and lately as I drove past the place I saw most of the trees I set out over 50 years ago still living. About 1873 Andrew McCrea arrived in Perham as general superintendent of Clark and McClure's big business. His old house now stands near the old brewery.

In the spring after the logging season hundreds of oxen could be seen feeding on the big wild prairie. Then they would be taken below and put into the great caravan with covered wagons headed for the great West with supplies for as far as Glendive and the Black Hills and Fort Garry. I have in my possession now old contracts from the government to Clark and McClure of St. Cloud for the delivering of different kinds of feed and meat; one is to deliver 8500 bushels of corn to Ft. Abacromby, N.D., at 92¢.

We would take the anchor out in a boat, dump it in the lake, then wind the logs up to it and repeat the same process until we were across.

We left Squaw Point on Pine Lake at Perham one night with a boom of logs. A storm came up and it snowed and rained. We dragged our logs and anchor across the lake where the hotel and cottages are now near Perham. We nearly froze. There was no dry wood. We went up the bank. A lot of Indians were buried in trees and on poles but the wind had blown the cover off the coffins and the porcupines had taken all but a long braid of hair. So we cut them down and cooked tea. The braids of hair smelt.

One winter we were in camp about thirty miles from Perham. Mr. Clark and Mr. McClure sent about forty men by team as far as the Toad River. There on the river bend was a flour mill owned by Kemper Bros., and Drahmann of Perham. Henry Kemper had a beautiful daughter, who now lives in St. Cloud, the wife of Frank Jung. Mr. Kemper had the first store in Perham. That winter the timber wolves were so numerous we were afraid to leave camp, at least I was. They were the size of police dogs. A bunch of them got after my brother one night when he was coming back to camp late. One started to howl, another would answer and soon he saw them coming up the lake in different directions. The camp was about half a mile and he out ran them. We could not leave the camp very early for the forest was dense and the trees were tall. In some places we could not see before the sun came up. By this time we were skidding logs or dragging them together and rolling them on skids so the skids could take them in big lots. We had six ox teams. In fact, we had no horses. We would work as long as we could see and then had three miles to walk to camp. Three men composed the skidding crew. A large wolf used to follow us every night. Roy Jewel of St. Cloud was with me. One night when we came to a beaver dam where the road was cut through we hid on each side of it and the wolf came along. We threw our axes at him from each side but he dodged them and stood there and showed his teeth. I knew that you should never take your eyes away from his eyes so there we were, a couple of darn ignorant "Mainetries," with no way to protect ourselves. We backed up, both of us, and he got suspicious. Then we beat it to where the oxen were but he followed us to camp.

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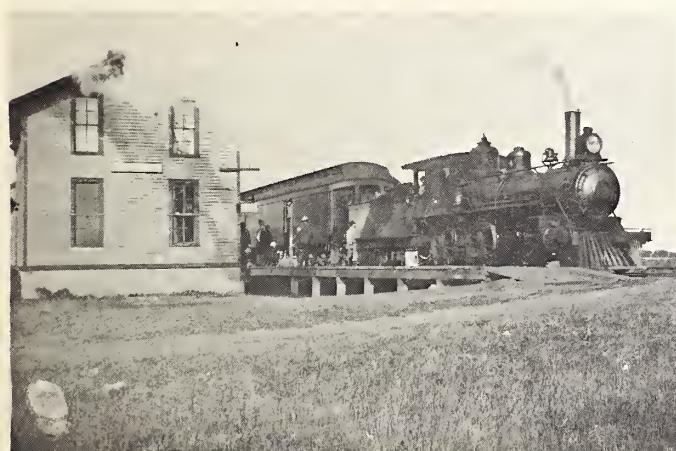
PERHAM, MINN.

# THE RAILROAD COMES THROUGH

In the fall of 1871 the railroad was built through Perham. It was on Sept. 30, 1871 that the first iron horse, a construction train, came to Perham. A story of pioneer doctoring is told about Dr. Dimmeler, the first doctor in Otter Tail County. Dimmeler was just out of school. A man working on the construction crew had his finger smashed by an iron rail. Dimmeler was called to amputate the crushed member. He was so nervous that he almost took off the wrong finger and was stopped just in time by a man holding the arm of the injured worker. Dr. Dimmeler later went to St. Cloud and became a well known physician.



Work Train at Perham, Sept., 1902



Otter Tail in 1910



Section Crew of 1920



Section Gang about 1917



Depot, Perham, Minn.



N.P. Depot in Perham in 1949



The Last Steam Engine to Run Through Perham

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# N.P. CREW STAKES OUT PERHAM SIGN IN 1871

No fanfare of trumpets nor ceremonies of any nature marked the birth of Perham in the spring of 1871, 100 years ago this year. In 1870 homesteaders in this section were cheered by the appearance of a railway survey crew who ran three lines through this locality, one cutting across a north corner of the Mohr farm, another of the present line of track and a third passed through Otter Tail. In 1871 the graders made their appearance working the middle line and in the fall of the year the steel crew followed laying track. That was all the settlers knew about the railroad plans.

Peter Mohr, whose father, Fred, homesteaded the farm north of Perham, related that in the spring of 1871 he saw several men driving a stake and putting up a sign

not far from the corner of the farm. When the men left he and a brother went down to see what was on the sign.

It contained but a single word, "Perham." That was the name selected by the townsite company for the town that was to displace the untamed prairie. It was the name of the first president of the Northern Pacific.

As a shipping point the newly created town began to gather the venturesome traders and merchants during the summer and fall who followed the frontier and the meager communal life grew and shaped itself — and as it grew — active real estate speculators began adding additions to the original town site. Settlers flocking in to homestead the land in this locality soon created a lively market and laid the foundation for its healthy growth.

## Steve Butler Arrives from England for N.P.

Steve Butler has presented the following very interesting sketch of his life to the Otter Tail County Historical Society, in connection with the coming reunion to be held at Perham June 28, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railway in this county.

I left Cripplestyle, Englind, July 16, 1872. My oldest brother took me to Salisbury, where I took the train to Liverpool. I was seventeen years old and this was my first train ride. I stayed there overnight and took the steamer Hibernian, the next morning.

Eight days later, we landed at Quebec, Canada. There, I breathed a sigh of relief, thinking we had gotten to America. Upon inquiry there, I learned that we had three days on the train and six days on the water before reaching Duluth, the place where my ticket was purchased to, Minnesota being well advertised in England.

The next day, I hired out to a man, who was hiring men for the Northern Pacific Railway. He sent me to Perham to work on a work train. When we reached Perham, there was only one house in sight towards Pine Lake, old man Mohr's house. The train stopped on the prairie. The conductor came to the caboose and said "Get off, this is Perham." I said, "I want to go to Perham," thinking that he had made a mistake. He said "This is Perham," and

kicked off my trunk. Three of us got off there, Mose and Henry Manston and myself. They were in the middle of the prairie and no town in sight. I said, "Let's walk back to the river, I saw." On our way we met a man and asked him how far it was to the river. He said "Nichtverste." I was disappointed as I thought that they spoke the English language in America, and here, the first man I met, could not understand. We turned back towards Perham and pretty soon Martin Shea came along with his work train and picked us up. He took us down to Negandomie Switch, now Richdale.

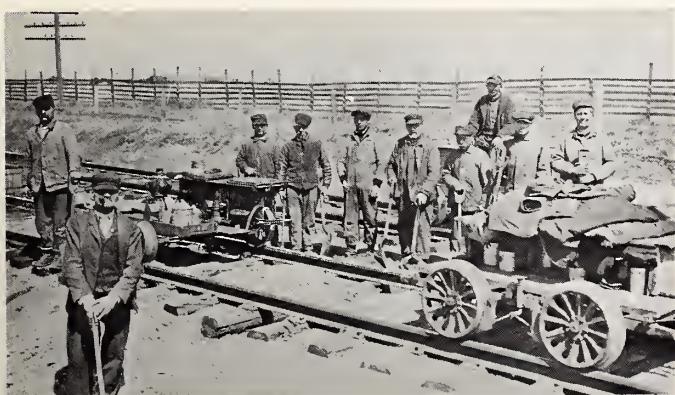
Henry Kemper was just moving up to the site where Perham was to be, from Rush Lake settlement, preparatory to starting a general store. He lived in a tent for a while.

At Richdale, we went to work the next day for Martin for \$2.50 per day. We paid \$4.50 a week for board and slept in the boarding house cars. We shoveled sand out of the cut by the river, one mile east of Perham.

Then Martin Shea was ordered up in the woods near Detroit Lakes to haul cord wood, which was used in the engines in those days. The railroad was built up as far as Oak Lake that fall. Being a light, small boy, I could hardly handle the heavy cord wood, up into the cars; so one day Martin said, "Here, lad, you go up to the boarding car and help the cook. Bring in the water, wood, etc." I said "What about my pay?" He said, "Never mind about the pay, you will get just the same." I helped the cook about two months. We lived well and fed 40 men.

In the fall of 1871 all work stopped on the railroad, on account of the failure of Jay Cook of New York, so we were called in to Brainerd for the winter. Mrs. Finley, the boarding house boss, told the four of us, we could stay in the cars, until she went out on the road again, as she had plenty to eat. We stole wood, in order to keep warm, from the railroad company, and stayed there until towards spring, expecting to be called out any day. There were hundreds of men out of work at Brainerd that winter. Towards spring, I had a row with Mrs. Finley and went up town to a hotel and asked for work. The hotel man said that he had nothing, but I could sweep out and fill up the lamps and wood box for my night's lodging, and I did so well that he kept me for a month.

When Andrew McCrea came to the hotel, looking for a boy, to be cookee in the Clark and McClure sawmills



Railroad Crew: L. to R.: Jack Kaminski, Fred Hass, Frank Schwintek, Pete Krayriekrock, F. W. Schwintek, Jack Tryscholtz, Pete Sbliskie, John Gratzek, Leo Januszewski and Oscar Waldie.

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11 BIG DEPARTMENTS

PERHAM  
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at Perham, I spoke up and said that I would go. So I hired out to McCrea, their manager, at \$40.00 per month. Andrew McCrea moved his family up from St. Cloud. I met his daughter, Amanda, who became my wife. There being no church in Perham, yet a minister from Detroit officiated at our wedding, the first one in Perham. McCrea's wife was the first death, so he gave Perham the land for the cemetery.

Kemper & Drahmann had a general store there. Louis Struett (father of Miss Anna Struett, who still lives at Perham), soon came and started a clothing store. Martin Schoenberger (father of Ben Schoenberger, who runs the furniture store at Perham) ran the hotel, where Martin Shea's now stands. The only churches were at Rush Lake. Old Dr. Richardson was the first doctor. His son, Al, became popular as a caller at the dances all over that section on account of his voice. He was also noted for the length of his red whiskers, which he folded carefully in his shirt bosom. Later, he was a representative in the legislature. Lewis Schroeder had a farm north of Perham.

The fall that we worked for Martin Shea, he took all the men to Detroit and told us all to vote for Horace Greeley, the Democratic candidate for president, which we did. This was the only time that I ever voted the Democratic ticket, as I soon became interested in politics and chose the Republican Party.

Capt. Wellman of Hobart, Aaron Scribner of Maine, John G. Nelson of Parkers Prairie and myself used to carry all the credentials to Fergus Falls from the east side of the county and usually controlled the convention.

I was elected county treasurer while living at Perham and served 16 years. I moved to Fergus Falls in 1892 where I still reside.

#### PERHAM STATION DOES WELL IN 1884

Bulletin file of August 7, 1884 — We have always claimed that this railroad station was doing a big business and today prevailed upon Agent Darling to give us figures as to the business done, which is as follows: Freight received, 345,925 pounds; freight forwarded, 334,835 pounds; total, 708,769 pounds. Total office receipts for the office for the month of July, including freight, expenses, telegraph, etc., amounts to \$5,307.35. The above figures will compare favorably with most of the towns along the line.



Robert Weickert Meat Market



Bill Lange in his Saloon, located where the Pine's Gift Shop is now, corner of Main Street and First Avenue. Taken about 1916.



Herman Krueger and his Standard Oil Truck



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# CHURCHES



## HISTORY OF CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH Written by Pastor Ed. Nieman

The first service was held Sept. 27, 1959, with approximately 110 persons present. The congregation was organized on Jan. 24, 1960. The church building and parsonage were dedicated on Sept. 22, 1960, with about 100 members. The first president of the congregation was Sherman Mandt.

Sunday School was first held on Oct. 4, 1959. Present membership of the congregation is made up of 64 families with a total of 245 baptized members. Leon Beyer is currently president.

Rev. Arthur M. Vorhes was first pastor and served until 1965. Rev. Philip T. Peterson served in 1966, Rev. Gary E. Gilthvedt served from 1967 to 1970. Since then Rev. Edward L. Nieman serves as pastor.

In 1939-40 an annex including a basement room equipped for Sunday School and a furnace were added. An educational building was added in the 1960's.

The local pastor also serves Dent and Richville congregations.



## HISTORY OF ZION REFORM CHURCH

In the fall of 1890, a group of men and women living in and near Perham, organized Sion's church. The congregation first met in what was known as Lange's schoolhouse. Rev. S. Spahr was the first pastor and organizer of the congregation. Later the church met for worship in a church building which stood on the site of the Martin Schmidt home. On July 30, 1893, in a special meeting, the congregation decided to build a church of its own. The building committee was: G. Kukowske, A. Beckman, C. Lange, C. Kehde, F. Rischow, N. Jahn, and E. Keerbs. In 1902 a parsonage was erected. Mrs. Timm and Mrs. S. Alberts made a liberal donation so the bell was installed in 1913. English services were first conducted in 1922 by Rev. J. Mau.

The name has now been changed to Church of Christ.

The late Bernice Jahn served as church organist and director of music for many years.



## METHODIST CHURCH

In 1882 the sanctuary and nave portion of the present building was built on land donated by A. A. White of St. Paul, agent for the Puget Sound Land Company. Instrumental in the building were Russell Brothers, Steve Butler, Sam Caughey, F. N. Chardburn, Andrew McCrea, and C. H. Tuesley.

## ST. LAWRENCE CHURCH

In 1865 Rev. Fr. Joseph Albrecht arrived from Ohio with a band of devoted followers to establish a colony in a new land. Of course, one of the first buildings was the church which burned in 1879. The old church bell, cast in Germany, and buried after the fire, was uncovered in the church cemetery in 1937. A new church was erected and still serves the ancestors of the first settlers of this community. The tall pines surrounding the church are a monument to the past, just as the St. Lawrence Church is a monument to the Rev. Albrecht and his faithful followers.



St. Lawrence Church - 1902

Henry Kemper reported in his history of Perham the popularity of Rev. Fr. Albrecht, the first pioneer clergyman of this county. He says: "The Reverend always extended a friendly and helping hand to the newcomers, especially the poor. They never left his presence without the necessities of life. He would travel across the prairies for miles although he was 70 years of age to show them lands and help their location. He died at the age of 84 years, on the 5th day of March, 1884. His remains were afterwards removed to Scio, Ohio.



St. Joseph Church

#### ST. JOSEPH'S, PERHAM

In the year 1867, two pioneers, Michael Schmitz and Florian Fehr arrived to find suitable farm land for themselves and friends and located near Marion Lake. The next year, Balz Fuchs, George Seifert, Martin Fieldler, Joseph Zimmermann and George Feider arrived and were followed shortly by Adam Gerber, George Alstadt, Blaze and William Hassler and their families. Their religious

needs were in charges of Missionaries until 1871 when plans were laid to build a church. It was a log structure. In 1882 a new church was erected. The artistic altars were donations to the parish, it is said, in memory of Father Schaut's mother, were blessed in 1898. Other additions were made later.

The first child baptized in the St. Joseph Church was the late George Alstadt, father of Frank and Ambrose Alstadt.

The marriage of Rosanne Gerber, daughter of Alois Gerber, and Philip Estrem of Minneapolis on Aug. 7, 1965, was the last wedding in the church.

The last funeral in the church was that of Lawrence J. (Larry) Delaney, Jr., on Sept. 28, 1965.

Since the fire that destroyed the church in 1965, the parish has been divided between Perham, Rush Lake, and Dent.



St. Stanislaus Church

#### ST. STANISLAUS PARISH IN PERHAM

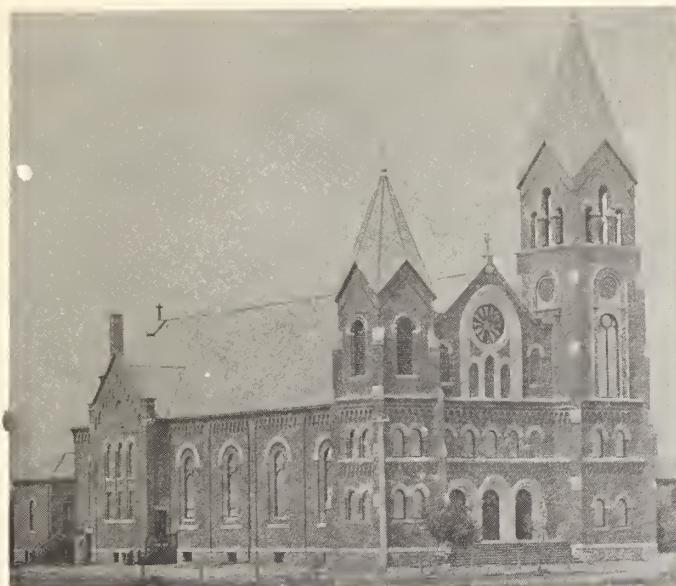
From 1870 to 1878 a number of Polish families settled in and around the town of Perham. In 1876 a mission for the Polish was held and resulted in the founding of the St. Stanislaus Society under the leadership of John Karsnia. The first church was erected under the supervision of Father Joseph Buh. In 1918 they added their own school.

The present church was erected in 1922, and the school was torn down in the 1940's.

#### ST. HENRY'S PARISH

In 1873 permission was received to start a mission and erect a church in Perham. The church was erected in 1875. The first child baptized was John Charles Gorman on Aug. 23, 1876. The first marriage was that of John Murphy and Lena Roach of Lake Park; The first death was that of Benjamin Kemper in August, 1876. Henry Kemper and John Drahmann were the first trustees.

In 1905-06 the present church was built. A Spanish tile roof was constructed in 1931.



St. Henry's Church



St. John's Lutheran Church  
of Corliss

#### ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH OF CORLISS

As early as 1888, Rev. A. Kretzschmar preached to a nucleus of eight Lutheran families in their log hut on week days. They included August Mischke, August Libitz, George Shelske, Karl Forerstner, Michael Utz, Jeremiah Krueger, Karl Wандери and William Papenfus.

Mr. Al Richardson and his wife were former teachers, and when the need came for a more suitable place of worship, they helped the small group obtain permission to build a public schoolhouse of logs near Bear Lake, in which they were privileged to conduct worship services. There is no record as to how long the small group used this schoolhouse, for their services, but it recalled, however, that one of the present members, Mrs. Albert Huwe, Sr., was baptized in the log schoolhouse.

About the year 1891, they organized and chose the name St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church. The first recorded fact is that on Dec. 27, 1891, the already organized congregation held a meeting and gratefully accepted a tract of land from Mr. Friedrich Fresonke for a church and cemetery. At this meeting it was decided not to build a log church, but instead one of sawed boards and timbers. Each family was to furnish boards, shingles, laths or beams. The building was completed on July 15, 1892 and dedicated to the glory of God.

The present church was built in 1929.



St. Paul's

#### ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH — 78 YEARS OLD

The small Lutheran congregation of the village that was served by Rev. H. Kretzschmar from the Trinity Lutheran church about three miles north of Perham and a small congregation of Lutherans holding services in the Lange school house about 3 and one-half miles west of Perham, united to be known as the St. Paul's Lutheran Congregation. In a special meeting on Oct. 15, 1893, it was decided to build a church. The building committee consisted of L. H. D. Schmidt, John Bauck, William Senske, Carl Schmidt and Chas. Notnagel.

May 20, 1894 was the laying of the cornerstone and the building was dedicated Oct. 14, 1894. L. H. D. Schmidt built the furnishings including the ornate altar. Three services were held for the dedication; Rev. C. Albrecht of Parkers Prairie, preached in the morning; in the afternoon, Rev. G. Natzat, and in the evening, Rev. C. C. Metz of Detroit Lakes. The Rev. George Groh was pastor.

He and Rev. A. E. Agather served the congregation for the first fifty years. Other pastors were: Rev. E. W. Steinhorst, Rev. Robert Haltner, Sr., Rev. J. W. Raedeke, Rev. C. D. Uetzman, present pastor since 1966.

The construction of the new church began in 1969 with dedication in May, 1970.



The first Catholic Church in Dora Township was used until the early 1900's.

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# OTTERTAIL CITY

During the years of 1868, '69 and '70, the town of Otter Tail sprang up, mushroom fashion into the limelight. In 1870, not only did Ottertail city have five hotels, seven stores, gambling houses, brewery, and the newspaper, but also it had several wholesale houses and was the distributing point for entire northwestern Minnesota. Among the business houses was the general store of Jim Nash, St. Paul House (Hotel), R. L. Frazee, E. G. Holmes & Co.—wholesale, and Englund & Johnson, wholesale.

A man by the name of McArthur ran a flour mill at

Balmoral. Fletcher, Loring and Bly ran a firm called the Railroad Supply House. When it was found that neither the Northern Pacific nor the Great Northern (which went by the way of Fergus Falls) would come through Ottertail city the booming village disintegrated almost with the same rapidity it had sprung into prominence. Buildings were moved to Perham and Fergus Falls and the pride and glory of the '70' was practically a deserted village by '74, robbed of its commercial importance by the railroad in 1871.

## PERHAM'S FIRST NEWSPAPER

The first newspaper issued in this part of the county printed its first edition on July 24, 1874. Kemper Bros. and Drahmann were the owners and the masthead bore the name of X. S. Burk, editor. Burk was one of the original N.P. R.R. engineers who was with the original survey crew from Duluth to Moorhead. The paper was called the "Perham News" and was printed in a frame building, which was later used for a lime house, that stood approximately where Al Miller's Jewelry shop is now. After the first issue the owners traded the paper to Burk for 40 acres of land. Burk was allowed \$15 per acre for his land, was given free rent of the building and a contract for \$100 in advertising. However, the "News" did not prosper. It went continually down hill and was sold to Ed Knappen. Knappen could not make a go of it either and it was sold to Ed Davidson. Davidson made a success of the paper and published it until his death in 1913. At that time Editor H. D. Smalley, Sr., bought it and combined it with the Enterprise which he had purchased in 1911.

During '79 and '80 Perham continued to grow rapidly. The winter of '79 was an extremely cold one and good

sledding all winter. Kemper Bros. and Drahmann bought the old saloon and dwelling of Mr. M. Mohr and Henry Kemper moved the postoffice into that building. He bought an entire new postoffice outfit from Yale and Town Mfg. Co. of Stamford, Conn. The new outfit consisted of 367 boxes of which 70 were lock boxes. The layout cost \$413.80.

Henry Kemper stated in his History of Perham that on "March 20, 1880, the first number of the 'Perham News,' a weekly paper, was issued by Hall and Dixon. It was named in honor of the original News which had long since died of heart disease, as the editor didn't have the heart to ask subscribers to pay up. During the summer of '80, the following buildings were erected: John Curo, dwelling; L. Struett built his new clothing store, the same which is now occupied by Editor Herman Schmalz, and from which Minnesota Volksblatt is issued. This was the first German paper in the county.

Another newspaper was started in Perham on May 3, 1877. It was entitled The Independent and was edited by F. M. Geoghegan. A copy of its first issue is on file at the Otter Tail County Historical Society.

### THE ENTERPRISE-BULLETIN CELEBRATED ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY — 1958

The Perham Enterprise-Bulletin had completed its 75th year of operation in 1958. There were newspapers in Perham before the Bulletin was established in 1882 — the Perham Journal, the Perham News, and a German language paper — but none was able to withstand the rigors of frontier economy.

The yellowed pages of the Bulletin's ancient files show John Burke as the editor of a four-page newspaper. Subscription rate in the '80's was \$2.00 per year.

The News was started in July 1874 by Kemper Brothers and Drahmann. They sold it several years later. Just what happened to the News after that is not clear, but it was evidently suspended before the Bulletin was started.

Ed Davidson was perhaps the most successful of the early editors. In those days, newspapers declared their political learnings and defended them vigorously and often. Davidson was both a printing craftsman and a pretty fair writer, handy tools of the trade in a small newspaper.

Politics was responsible for the creation of the Perham Enterprise in 1909. A group of businessmen, led by M. J. Daly, pioneer Perham lawyer and political leader, induced J. P. Coughlin to come to Perham in competition with Davidson. In August of 1911, Coughlin sold the Enterprise to Harvey D. Smalley, Sr., a native of Caledonia, Minn., who was at the time editor of the Sioux City (Iowa) Stock Journal.

The Enterprise was located in a building which stood on the vacant lot across from the present Postoffice.

Davidson died in 1913, and his widow sold the Bulletin to Mr. Smalley a few months later. The newspapers were combined under the title Enterprise-Bulletin. The equipment was also consolidated into the Bulletin building.

In those days, when all type was set by hand, it took four compositors to set up a four page newspaper. In 1918, when the newspaper was located in what is now the Coast-to-Coast building, the first linotype was installed. Wartime labor shortages delayed the installation.

In 1942 a 20x56 brick and concrete building was constructed on the present lot, and the plant moved into what appears to be its permanent location.

The early 1930's found the Newspaper battling to stay solvent, like so many other business places hit by the depression. At the bottom of the slump, with four persons

employed, the entire gross for the year was \$6,500, old records reveal.

As the depression waned, new equipment was installed increasing the capacity of each employee.

The Jubilee Edition was 60 pages in size.

**"Thanks is due today, 1971, to Mr. Harvey D. Smalley for the beautiful editions of the Enterprize that weekly go out to the Perham area."**

**"Most of the story contents of this book, besides being the works of writers named elsewhere on these pages, are past releases from the Perham Enterprise through the years."**

**Maggie and Scotty Swan**

## **INDIAN SCARE IN 1874-75**

**(Quoted from Henry Kemper's History of Perham) — 1874**

"I think it was in the winter of 1873 and '74. It was bitter cold, when a report came to town that a large band of hostile Chippewa Indians camped on the north shore of Little Pine Lake in the timber about where the boat house and bridge is now located at the inlet of the lake, and that unless speedy action was taken to remove the Indians, that some night when somniferring, the village inhabitants might awaken some fine morning minus their scalps. Capt. Geo. Reider of St. Joseph, hearing of this, said that he was an old Indian fighter from way back in '62 and that he would undertake to drive the redmen from their perch if he could raise a company of volunteers and have a chance to drill them a little before he made the attack. Our citizens felt much relieved from their anxiety to know that there was one brave man in the land who was willing to risk his life for the sake of saving many others.

Reider was therefore unanimously chosen captain and authorized to organize a company of volunteers. He at once sent to the armory at St. Paul for fifty guns with bayonets, belts, cartridges, boxes and supplies of ammunition. While we were waiting for the guns, etc., to come, the captain picked up 50 men in the village and from all the surrounding towns and commenced drilling them in the streets of Perham three times a week. Of course he had to have music, so J. B. Kemper hunted up an old rusty tin whistle and John Frisch, Sr., being a butcher by trade, made himself a drum out of an old discarded cheese box, upon one end of which he stretched a sheep pelt, from which he had first picked the wool out as much as possible, leaving the wood bottom in the other end of the cheese box. The drum did not sound very loud; it had a kind of muffled tone, on account of the wool that was left on the pelt, but the thing answered the purpose all right. The guns arrived in due course of time, and, by this time Capt. Reider had drilled his men sufficiently so they could go through the Hayfoot, Strawfoot act very nicely. At the last drill the Captain gave his orders for every man to appear the next morning at sunrise under the penalty of death in case of failure, without good and valid cause. The next morning was a bitter cold one but our men re-

sponded to a man at the Captain's roll call. Then he gave his men a short instruction, of Military tactics of course, and then headed by the marshal, music, tin whistle and cheese box, they marched in the direction of Little Pine Lake. It was 40 below zero. The rest of us remained in town keeping hot water and other things in readiness for the return of the soldiers in case some should be wounded. We waited for an hour or more, when suddenly we heard a number of shots fired in the direction of Little Pine — then we were certain that the battle had commenced. Then we boiled the boiling water still more, prepared lint, plasters and other things for the wounded soldiers which would soon be sent in. But the shooting was of short duration and we knew that the battle was fought and that either side or the other must have got licked. We waited another hour, and to our great joy beheld our soldiers coming back in the distance. We had to use a field glass to be able to see whether all of our men returned or not and whether some were being carried, but to our further joy we saw each one was coming along on his own pegs. When they came near enough for us to recognize their features, we noticed and were much alarmed at some of the men bleeding from their hands and faces, but on close examination we found that they had been scratched by the prickly ash which grows in abundance around the lake.

Many of the boys had their noses nipped with frost. There was no music when they returned. Kemper's whistle had frozen up and John Frisch had knocked the stuffing out of his drum and had dumped it over his head to keep his nose and ears from freezing. He looked like a Turkish Sultan.

The Captain told us that they had scared the Indians badly and that they had promised to leave at once. Therefore he found it unnecessary. But later on some of the boys gave way and told the truth and said that they had lurked and scouted around among the prickly ash until they had their faces and hands all scratched, when they ventured through the bush, and coming up the lake shore met old man Finday, coming through the bush, and coming up from the lake with a nice 12 pound pickerel in his

hands and shouted "Bushu nitchey." The Captain then told him that they must leave the premises at once or he would have to force them to go. But Finday had replied, "Crown" (No sire), we were "bogate" (Hungry) and came here to fish, and as soon as we have enough fish to last us during the winter we will go, not before. The treaty closed and the only condition was that they might catch as many "Kigo" (fish) as required for their winter's supply and then leave. Two years later the keeper of the Armory came here from St. Paul to get the guns. He called upon me (Henry Kemper) because I had become responsi-

ble for the guns by signing a bond for \$300 with Capt. Rieder.

I could find but a half dozen guns in the village, the rest were scattered all over the country. I called upon Capt. Rieder and made him hustle for the guns. I had begged the keeper for two weeks time to collect the guns. In about a month the officer returned and I had been lucky enough to collect all the guns but two. He asked what had become of them? I told him that they were lost in the "Battle of Little Pine Lake." He laughed and was satisfied, and so was I." — by Henry Kemper.

### "SQUAW POINT"

by Eloise Oswald

On the shores of "Big Pine Lake" (near my home) lie buried two famous Indian characters that played a great part in the "Early Days" of Perham, Minn. Above you will see the greatest tribute or symbol of Indian Tradition left to be viewed by the many, who come to visit this heroic resting place of these brave chieftains.

#### The Legend of the Graves is as follows:

During the early days, when the white settlers were first coming into our community, a certain tribe of Indians were fighting against each other. An Indian Squaw in love with an Indian Chief on the opposite side of the lake, swam across Big Pine to warn her lover that her tribe intended to attack them. Both were killed in this battle and buried side by side near the shores of the lake. Every other year tribes of Indians used to come to these graves to repaint and decorate them. Some times Indian trinkets — blankets, peace pipes, food, clothing, etc., were left on the graves, as a token of love and respect, that they still live among them and are not forgotten. Regular Indian Ceremonies were performed at the graves ending with "War Dance" conducting the dead "To The Happy Hunting Grounds."



Indians



Indian Grave on Squaw Point, Big Pine Lake

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# REMEMBER WHEN?



The good old days



Old Fashioned Swim Suit



Roller Coaster at Little Pine about 1904



Minnie Kerbs (Mrs. Hubert Paulson)



Henry Sieling and his crew installing the first telephone lines in the area. This is in July, 1912.



117 Bu. 20 lbs. Potatoes. Gilbert Antonsen, about 1910



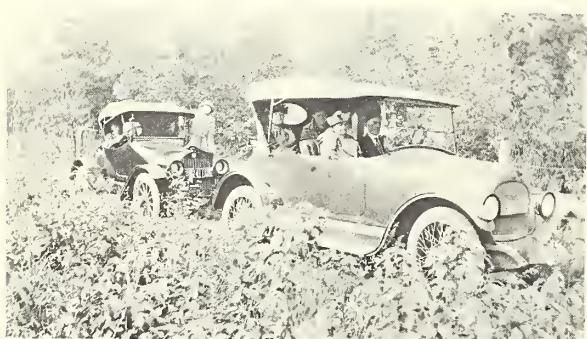
A Velee Auto as sold by Albert Haut. Mr. and Mrs. Haut in the front seat. About 65 years old.



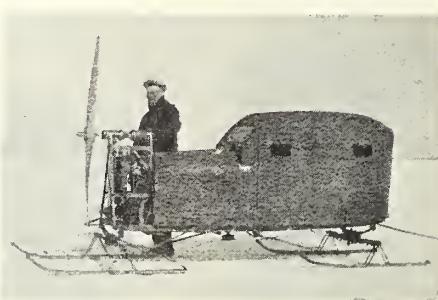
World War I Soldier  
coming home.



Churning Butter



Country Club Overland in foreground.  
Empire in background - 1918



Snow Mobile  
Built by Walter Schmidt in 1925



Vince Drahmann, Driving



Dock at Spruce Lodge on 4th of July, 1913



The Balloon - Perham



BRIDGE, TOAD RIVER, PERNAM MINN.



Street Scene of Perham in 1904 in early winter



1919 Memorial Day Parade



Rush Lake Baseball Team at Boedigheimer Lake



Maxwell



Parade May 30, 1919



Snow Mobile



Dick Beitz on Indian Motor Bike. Bernie Jahn on Wagner



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# HIGHLIGHTS OF MR. DRAHMANN'S TALK

May 11, 1966

The Polish people who settled here came directly from Poland, but the people of German descent came from Ohio because of religious reasons. The Drahmanns came from Ohio.

The first County Seat was located at Otter Tail City where the old hotel known as the "Saint Paul House" and occupied by the Schumacher family now stands.

The flour mill located at Toad Lake served the whole Northwest and some was shipped to Winnipeg.

The first log house was at Fort Gary back of Big Pine Lake.

The first sawmill burned down.

Perham was a wild place in those days with lynching, fighting, and drinking being very common. It had thirteen saloons. The father of Nathaniel McConachie was the manager of the first baseball team at Perham.

Mrs. George Young was the first white child born at

Perham. She was the mother of Mrs. Mary Rice.

The first school house was located on the lot of 311 Second Avenue S.E., where the Vince Drahmann home is now located. It was later moved to the lot where Saint Henry's Parish is now located. Mr. Vince Drahmann attended this school.

The Chippewa Tribe was very friendly. The Indians would come to Perham to trade. The fathers and grandfathers and children would ride in the cart drawn by oxen or horses while the women walked behind. When they returned home the women would follow after the carts, carrying the groceries.

One old Indian always charged at Drahmann's Store during the winter and would pay in the spring. One winter he told Mr. Drahmann he could not charge that winter because he knew that he would not be there in the spring to pay and he did not want to die owing any bills. He did die that winter.

The third graders of the class of 1964-1965 started us on this project.

## PERHAM

(Written by the third graders in the classes of  
Mrs. Lawler Olson and Mrs. Roger Jones.) — 1964-1965

The prairie around the present site of Perham was settled by people of German and Polish ancestry who came here from Ohio. They left Ohio to come to Minnesota where there was danger from the Indians in order to get their homesteads. Most of the Indians were friendly. They gave the early settlers calico corn.

The first houses were made of sod. Temporary log cabins were also hastily erected to serve as winter quarters.

The nearest railroad was at that time in St. Paul, Minn. Late in the first winter the settlement ran out of salt. They had to go to St. Cloud to get more supplies.

The lowly rutabaga played an important part in keeping the colony from starvation the first winter. Flour and smoked meats ran out, and potatoes and corn were delicacies. The first band of six planted rutabagas immediately upon their arrival. These were put in a hastily constructed root cellar. Not one deer was shot that first winter.

The largest tract of broken land was about 14 acres. Corn, rutabagas, oats, and wheat were the principal crops.

In 1870 the Northern Pacific sent men in here. They drove three stakes: one on the corner of the Fred Moore farm, one at the present site of Perham, and one at Otter Tail City.

In 1871 they started the railroad through here. The settlers knew very little about what was going on.

In 1872 several men came in and drove stakes on the Mohre farm. When they left Peter Mohre and his brother went to see what the signs said. The signs had just one word of them — Perham. The Town Site Company selected the name Perham for the town in this untamed prairie.

Perham was the name of the first president of the Northern Pacific Railroad. Mr. Perham never visited Perham. Perham's location came within one acre of being located by the "old brewery" on Otter Tail River to the east of the present location.

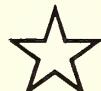
The birth of Perham was in 1872.

In June, 1872, Mr. Kemper (father of William Kemper) and Mr. Drahmann erected the first wooden building on the North side of the N.P. tracks. The building housed the first mercantile business and the first post office in Perham. A boot and shoe box was secured and fixed with pigeon holes. The postmaster received \$12.00 a year.



Paul Miller's Jewelry Store in the Early Days

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# SCHOOLS

## PERHAM'S FIRST FRAME SCHOOL BUILT IN 1875

In October 1875, Perham's first frame school house was constructed. This building stood where V. H. Drahmann's home now stands. At the time it was built it was of no use — there were no children to be sent there. After a number of years this building was moved to the lot on which St. Henry's parish house now stands and was used as the first parochial school. A brick veneer was placed on the building at that time. In 1916 this building was replaced by the present St. Henry's School.



School Dist. #51 about 1892

## SCHOOL FOUNDED ON SEPT. 19, 1883 BY REV. BUH

September 16, 1958, marked the 75th anniversary of St. Henry's Parish School. This event was celebrated June 1 at the 8 o'clock Mass at St. Henry's Church when the 75th class of the eighth grade graduates was led by the lower grades down the aisle of the church in preparation for their Corporate Communion.

Given a place of prominence during the Mass were five people who were members of the first class in St. Henry's School: Mrs. George Young, Mr. and Mrs. Martin Mutschler, Mr. Henry Mutschler, and Mr. John Scheidecker.

St. Henry's first parish school was erected in 1883 by pioneers who came to Perham mostly from Catholic settlements in Ohio and were anxious to provide Catholic training and education for their children.

The first school house was a frame, two story structure, which also served as the Sisters' residence. It was blessed by Fathers Tomazin, Gunkel and Lange, the latter being pastor at the time. The school opened Sept. 16, 1883, with an enrollment of 60 pupils. Two Benedictine Sisters were in charge of the school: Sister Clemene and Sister Seraphica.

In later years the old public school building was bought and moved to the church ground to provide for the increase in attendance. Eventually, overflowing attendance forced some classes to be held in a concrete building previously a harness shop, and now occupied by the State Highway Department.

In 1916, the distressing condition came to an end with

the construction which provided school rooms, a parish hall, a gymnasium and apartments for the Sisters. The building of the \$35,000 school was directed by Father Alexis Dehaut, and it was connected to the church by a tunnel for the children to pass to and from church on cold or rainy days.

The original school building built in 1883, was torn down in 1919, and part of the lumber was used in the construction of the present rectory.

In 1947, a Sisters' Home was purchased from John Kukowske, Sr., thus ending more than sixty years of living in the school.

At present the school consists of five large classrooms, a parish hall, gymnasium, lunch room and central heating plant, which also heats the church. This year the school will open an additional classroom.

The enrollment in 1958 was 347 with seven teachers, six Benedictine Sisters and one lay teacher. These were Sisters Ruth Mary, Gregor, Hildegarde, Marcelle, Valera, Ann, and Mrs. Robert Schmidt. Today, the enrollment is 165 pupils.

## CORLISS TOWNSHIP DIST. 227

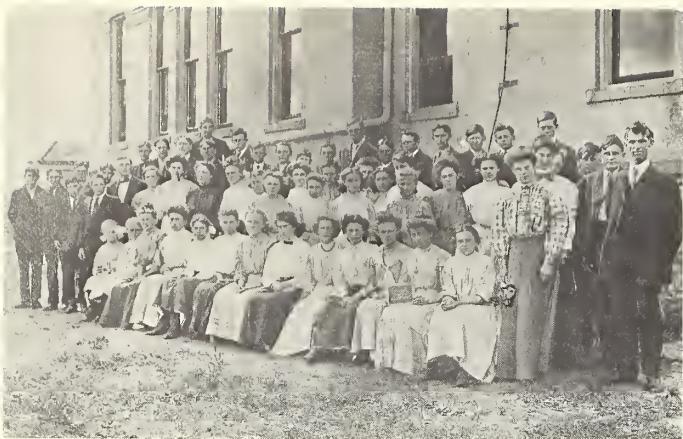
Another school house was built in 1890 when John Fiedler sold a half acre of his farm for school purposes. It was named District 227 of Corliss Township. This school house became too small and in 1921 a large school was built. This served its purpose until 1969 when it was consolidated with District 549 of Perham.

In 1921, there were 40 pupils going to school and by 1940, there were 60 pupils on the census list. The District then voted to send the 7th and 8th grades to the Perham Public School.

At one time this school became the second largest rural school in Otter Tail County. Henry A. Fiedler was elected as school clerk for 42 years.



School Dist. #237 of Edna Township, built by Fred Lueberman in 1906, now used by Lake Sybil Rod & Gun Club.



Perham High School in 1909, Mr. Costigan, Supt.



School Dist #129 having lunch on the wood pile in 1914



St. Joe School about 1910



School Dist. #13 about 1914



St. Stanislaus School in 1912



Maypole Dance, 1915 - 2nd Grade



St. Henry's School - 1913



Perham Public School

# DID YOU KNOW?

In July, 1872, the Lake Superior Puget Sound Company laid out the original town site in lots. The lots sold for \$200.00 to \$300.00.

## Important Dates:

- 1871 — Railroad started to survey land.
- 1872 — Township Founding. Kemper and Drahmann erected the first wooden building on the North side of tracks. This housed P.O. Lots sold. First carload of wheat shipped.
- 1875 — Saint Henry's Church built.
- 1880 — "Perham News" weekly paper was issued.
- 1881 — Saint Stanislaus Church built.
- 1882 — Methodist Church built.
- 1883 — Saint Henry's School built.
- 1883 — Steve Butler was the first man in Perham to purchase a U.S. Postal Note. Scarlet Fever epidemic.
- 1884 — Construction of N.P. Elevator began. First fire department organized. Began work on artesian well.
- 1886 — Clemence Colo died.
- 1894 — Log drive from Saint Cloud to Winnipeg, Canada.
- 1900 — Saint Paul's (Mo. Synod) Lutheran Church built.

## PERHAM BREWERY HAD \$40,000 FIRE IN 1884

The Perham Brewing Co., under the direction of Peter Schroeder, did a rushing business in 1884. They added bottled beer to their products and enlarged their plant. Misfortune overtook the brewery, however, when a \$40,000 fire razed the buildings. The fire caught in the dry room and the men sleeping inside were not awakened until the entire upper part of the building was in flames. The fire spread so rapidly that it was impossible to save anything. The local chemical department saved \$6,000 worth of beer by spraying their hose on the beer room. In the building were 9,000 bushels of barley and 3,000 bushels of malt and 35 bails of hops, all of which were destroyed. Of the \$40,000 only \$17,000 was covered by insurance.



Hassler Hat Shop



Printing Office - 1870

## THE SALT FAMINE

Temporary log cabins were hastily erected to serve as winter quarters. The first winter was a severe one. The nearest railroad station was at that time St. Paul. St. Cloud was the closest source of supplies, and that being 125 miles distant, the little band of settlers were deprived of many of the necessities of life to which they were accustomed to in the homes in Ohio. Late in the first winter the settlement ran out of salt. Joe Weis and Joe Boedigheimer with two yoke of cattle were sent to St. Cloud for supplies but upon the return trip had been caught on the prairie south of Clitheral by a terrific blizzard and nearly perished. They abandoned the supplies on the prairie and got to Clitheral safely. With the aid of the residents of that city they were able to bring the supplies to Clitheral, but were only able to proceed to Rush Lake with half of them. In some manner the salt was one of the articles left behind. One day passed after all salt was gone. The second day nothing seemed to taste right and the third day they could not eat and became sick.

Mike Doll volunteered to go on snow shoes of Clitheral and fetch the precious salt. Braving the ferocity of winter storms he started out. It took two days and one night to make the round trip of 48 miles. His spirit and stamina bore him over the unmarked trail and back to his fireside and the cheers of his comrades. The salt famine was over and the occasion was celebrated with great hilarity, yet with solemn thanks.

## OTTER TALES

Twenty-two years before the arrival of the Rush Lake Settlement in 1866, the Woods Trail from St. Cloud to Winnipeg (then called Fort Gary) wound its way across Otter Tail County following the Leaf River and Otter Tail Lake. A tiny fur trading post and land offices called Otter Tail sprang up in the vicinity of Otter Tail. The land office, which played a conspicuous part as the site of one of the earliest land offices in Minnesota, was raided by the Indians in 1862, its records partially destroyed, and its career brought abruptly to an end. The census of 1860 showed Otter Tail county with a population of 250.



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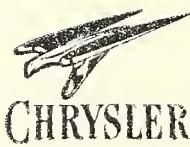
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**OTTERTAIL, MINN.**

# PERHAM HEARS ITS FIRST LOCAL BAND

## (From Henry Kemper's History

"October 24th, 1880, John Haluck arrived here from Ohio, and taught school in the St. Joseph district and organized a band there. This awakened the young men of Perham and we also organized a band with John Hauck as instructor.

Our first band members were the following: Michael Waltz, Louis Struett, John Wimmer, Theo. Struekens, J. B. Kemper, C. H. Tuesley, John Gerber, Sr., Peter Mohr, Andrew Schoenberger, and Henry Kemper. We rehearsed and practiced diligently and in six month's time we had advanced so far that we could play, "Coming Through the Rye," and other little old time tunes. We then gave open air concerts, serenades, etc.

I shall never forget the first open concert we had on the street crossing. The people were highly elated over our achievement and threw bouquets and other things at us. We started from our hall and marched up the street, just like we had seen other bands do in the cities, and played the last strains of "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys are Marching." — We hadn't advanced far enough to play the first part of the tune. The drums gave the usual signal to commence playing brr bum bum.

Mike Walz being the tallest man in the band, took the lead. All went very smoothly and nice, good time, heavy expression, and the attack was brilliant — out of sight.

But just as we got opposite the Merchants Hotel, John Frisch's big yellow dog, who had never heard such fine music, rushed into the street and made a sudden halt in front of Mr. Waltz. Mike's eyes were intent upon his music book, having a difficult vibration to perform, fell over the nasty dog. Louis, just behind him, fell over Mike, Tuesley was the next man in the same pinch and seeing the havoc in front of him, played leap frog over the two, but turned back to help the boys up. Mr. Walz had bent his slide trombone by the incidental fall, and had to stop a little to straighten it up, Struett and Tuesley assisting. The rest of us marched and played on, to the street crossing and formed a circle. By this time, Walz, Struett and Tuesley came up, playing their unfinished part of the tune.

Now the concert was given orders to turn to page one and play "Sweet Bye and Bye." Walz, Struett and Tuesley had not been informed. Prof. Hauck gave the time one-two play and off we started. The attack was good, but what followed? Tuesley had misunderstood the orders of the professor and played, "The Last Rose of Summer." Struett thought we were to play the same tune that we had while marching and he tooted away at it with a vengeance. Walz got his book upside down by the unlucky fall and played the first tune backwards, commencing at the end. Prof. Hauck jumped up and down like a jumping jack, pulled his hair and shouted, "Wo! Wo! Hold on! You're Off!" Well, we took a new start and this time did a little better. And Perham had a band!"

## Crude Coffin for First Deceased

Clemence Cole, who arrived in November 1886, was the first of the little band to succumb. There was no doctor within a hundred miles and though his friends did their best to minister to him their efforts were unavailing. He died late in the winter from pneumonia, as nearly as can be guessed from the symptoms.

For a coffin, the men knocked apart the packing boxes

in which they had brought their belongings and constructed a crude box. Cole was buried on the top of a knoll east of the church. This ground was used as a cemetery until 1885 when it was moved to its present location.

The original cemetery still remains on the land usually designated as the Paul Nau farm, on which Guenther Morgenroth resided.



A. E. John Variety Store - 1917



Herman Nieman Garage

# PERHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT THROUGH THE YEARS

The Pioneers, as the newly organized fire department called themselves, held their first drill Tuesday, Jan. 22, 1884. The first drill team consisted of running ladders up and down Concordia Hall.

H. F. Holst was in charge of the hose. Fred H. Davies, John Oswald, John Hall, Phil Fitzpatrick, and Amos Marckel were in charge of the hose and ladder. Math Burelbach was in charge of the chemical in 1891.

In the early days of Perham, provisions had been made to cope with fires. The first equipment was a hose cart with one and a half inch hose and a pumper operated by manpower. It was a double acting pump and the faster the men pumped, the more pressure they had.

The building housing this equipment was located in the middle of the street about 40 feet from Highway 10, with the Grand Pacific Hotel (now the municipal Liquor Store) and the Cooper Shop (now Paul's Tavern).

From the railroad water tank, there was an underground pipe laid with stand pipe and hose connection by the southwest corner of the liquor store. Later the frame city hall was built on the same place as the present building housed the equipment.

Along about 1896-1898 there was a well at the Power Plant and three hydrants were installed. Perham Fire Department then used standard sized hose. By that time they had the Hook and Ladder Company, Hose Company one and two and the Chemical Engine Company.

From then on the fire department grew with the village of Perham. The City Hall was built to house the trucks and equipment, and is still used in 1971. The first fire truck was purchased from Schmidt Bros. in 1924.



Fire truck built by Henry Schmidt Blacksmith about 1924

The biggest fires in Perham will be remembered by many of the readers; they were the Perham Elevator which has burned four different times since 1958. Also the fire that burned the St. Joe Church in 1966.

Today we have a pumper truck that serves only the village unless called to other towns. The John Bean Hi Pressure fog truck which serves five and one half townships and Richville besides Perham. We also have a tanker that holds one thousand gallons of water, and can also be used as a pumper.

In 1968 a rescue unit was added and they serve ten townships and three villages.

Henry B. Moenkedick, and Robert Perry were the Fire Chiefs for many years. Now Marlin Zitzow is Chief and Marlin Cole is the secretary.



Perham Fire Department about 1895

**THEN**



**NOW**



# HOSPITAL



St. James Hospital 1902. Note board walk. It was told that ringing of the bell summoned the doctor when needed.

The St. James Hospital was first built in 1902. Mother Angela of St. Francis Convent, Little Falls, at the request of Perham citizens, sent Sister M. Francis and Sister M. Agnes to investigate the prospects. After the nuns reported the results of their investigation it was then decided to build a hospital. The general contract was let to Mr. Alex Nelson of Perham for \$7,800.00. With everything else the total cost of the building was about \$12,000.00. On October 23, 1902, the hospital was dedicated by the Rt. Rev. James Trobec, Bishop of St. Cloud.

In 1926, they added another addition because the community was growing and the hospital was too small to meet their demands. The addition was 60 feet in length, three stories high, besides a complete basement. It was also equipped with an elevator which was a convenience of great value in a modern hospital. The hospital was under the management of the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls.

The year 1952, the hospital celebrated their Golden Jubilee Anniversary.

In 1957, the State Department of Health said that the Perham Hospital didn't meet the minimum requirements set by the State.

It was brought up to the Community and the only answer was to build a new hospital. Then it was decided to raise funds.

Albert G. Rotta was appointed the general chairmanship of the appeal for funds to build the new community



Sisters that staffed St. James Hospital

hospital. The total cost estimated was \$500,000.00 for the one-story structure. The campaign set a goal of raising \$250,000.00. The hospital would be aided with Hull-Burton funds and the federal government would pay 45% of cost of the approved project. The fund raising included fifteen townships and five surrounding villages. The campaign started October 21, 1957. They reached their set goal and even went over their goal.

The week of June 2, 1958, the new Memorial Hospital was underway. August 30, 1959, the hospital held its Open House.

The Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception, Little Falls, and the Memorial Hospital Association Directors of Perham reached an agreement that the Sisters would manage the hospital. The Sisters propose to convert the present St. James building and operate it as a nursing home.

St. James proved to be too small, so in 1969-70 the Memorial Home was built, which has sixty-two beds. All are being used.



Rear view of Schmidt Bros. Mfg. Co. about 1900 Two on right are Henry and Louis Schmidt, Owners.

*Congratulations*

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# SCHMIDT WAGON FACTORY HISTORY

The Schmidt Wagon Factory had its origin in the year of 1889. L. H. D. Schmidt was a native of the Village of Altonbrucken, in the Province of Hanover, Germany, the son of Dieterich Schmidt, a blacksmith. For a period of somewhat over two hundred years the blacksmith trade in the Schmidt family was handed down from father to the eldest son.



L. H. D. Schmidt, Founder of Schmidt Wagon Factory



L. H. D. Schmidt passed away in January, 1943. Thereafter, the business continued to operate under the name of "Schmidt Brothers" (sons of L. H. D.) until 1946, when the business was sold and discontinued as a wagon factory.

## REMEMBER WHEN?



Perham Farmer Store — 1920



The old Shoe Shop



Built by Perham businessmen to foster potato growing. Managed first by John Frish and then sold to Drahmann Bros. who operated it for 16 years.

**PERHAM  
CENTENNIAL  
PRE-EVENTS  
DANCE**

**WERE YOU THERE?**





Mayor  
Ernie  
Kollar

## Dear Friends and Neighbors

*On behalf of the City Council and other members of City Government, I extend a most sincere greeting to all who attend our Centennial Celebration and participate in any way.*

*I also wish to thank the many, many cooperative people who gave of their time, money, and talents to organize and conduct the 100th Birthday Anniversary of the arrival of the railroad.*

*We are extremely proud of our city and are confident that the second century will be one of continued progress and accomplishment.*

*Sincerely,*

*Mayor*

## PERHAM VILLAGE COUNCIL



Sandy DiBrito



Vern Nundahl



Ervin R. Lehmkuhl



Edgar Rosen

# CENTENNIAL BELLS



Olga Mayer



Edris Meier



Agnes Weis



Laura Sieling



Ruth Knuttila



Joyce Haverland



Verona Larson



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Tops in Trapeze Performance



"Chick" Mauthe, Show Organist

## CENTENNIAL

### Calendar of Events

100 years Ago the Railroad came to Perham.  
Join the fun and excitement of our Centennial  
Year!

**WED., AUG. 11** — Kiddie Parade, Stage Show  
beginning at 6:30 p.m.  
A.M. — Inter-denominational Religious  
Services.

**THURS., AUG. 12** — Farmers' Day, Milking Con-  
test, Flea Market, Astronaut's Visit, and  
100 gun Salute, 8 p.m.  
Official bustlette Style review contest.

**FRIDAY, AUG. 13** — Grand Ball, Belle Contest  
and Coronation of Queen, 8:30 p.m.

**SAT., AUG. 14** — Grand Parade at 2:00 p.m.,  
Historical Pageant at 8:00 p.m.

**SUN., AUG. 15** — Interdenominational Reli-  
gious Services in morning at Paul Miller  
Park. 2:00 p.m., Pioneer recognition, Ice  
Cream Social and Time Capsule Ceremony.  
8:00 p.m., Whisker Judging and Shaving  
Contests.



"SMITH'S CANINES"



JEFF & LITA  
Novelty Dance Team

## CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE



Standing, left to right . . . Larry McKinley, Bill Hughes, Don Swenson. Seated . . . Carol Fistler



Standing, left to right . . . Walt Shasky, Frank Bradshaw, Fred Huebsch. Seated . . . Verona Larson

### *Congratulations to Perham*

*I have enjoyed having the task of being General Chairman of this Centennial Celebration and wish to thank all those who assisted in any way. It has been very rewarding to see the community spirit, enthusiasm and cooperation of area citizens, without whom this Anniversary of the Coming of the Railroad to Perham could not have been a success.*

*Larry McKinley*

# KANGAROO KOURT, POLICE & JUDGE



Kangaroo Kourt "judge," Al Moe



Jail-break



The "phony fuzz" Kangaroo Kourt "police." Standing: Burt Iverson and Bob Kinlund; Kneeling: Bob Licence and Jack Schmidt.



Jerry Kunza



George Doom



---

Other  
Pre-events



# CENTENNIAL



Dr. Ray Fistler family — Back, left to right: Nancy, Jim, Ray; Front: Jon, Carol.



Don Bernauer family — Back:Dolores and Don; Front: Cindy, Cathy, and Connie.



George Doom family — Back row, left to right: Phyllis, George, and nephew, Kim Wiking; Middle, left to right: Jay, Tami; Front: Craig.



Lee DeFrance family — Back, left to right: Ron, Lee, Tom; Front: left to right: Lauri, Ruth, and Debbie.



Herb Meier's gals — Left to right: Debbie, wife Edris, and Pam.

# FAMILIES



Patrick Doll family — Back: Ellen and Pat; Front: Peter, Debra, and Rose.



Larry McKinley family — Left to right: Kevin, Leeann, Barbara, and Larry.



Paul LaFond family — Back: Bernice and Paul; Front: Mike.



Fred Huebsch family — Back, left to right: Fred Geromaine, Jennifer; Front, left to right: Nancy, Doug, Stacie, and Peggy.



Dr. George Kupferschmid family—Back: Jeanette and George; Front: Kevin and Kris.

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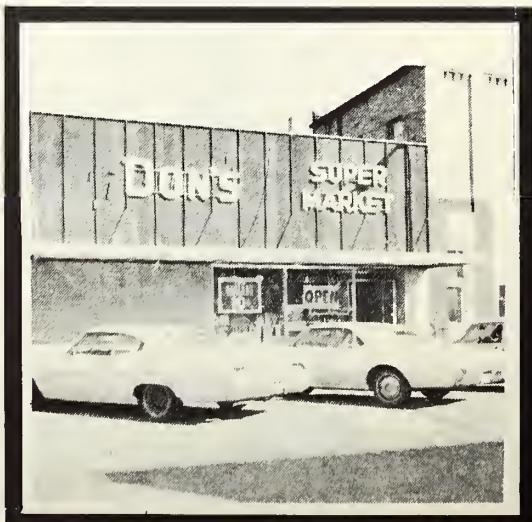


B. J. Iversen  
Branch Office Mgr.  
Perham, Minn.

BEST WISHES

ON YOUR

100th BIRTHDAY



DON'S  
SUPER  
MARKET

Perham

# CENTENNIAL FAMILIES



Sandy DiBrito family — Back: Sandy and Theresa; Front: Kevin, Kyle, Deanne, and Maria.



Roger Harmer family: Back: Karen and Roger; Front: Joel and Heidi.



Harley Haverland family: Jan and Harley, Vicki and Lori.



Arthur Ziolkowski family: Arthur, Sr., Rose, and Arthur, Jr.



Dr. Richard Omacht family: John, Kathy, Janice, and Dick.



Gearld Van Watermulen family: Sue and Craig, Gearly and Tracey.



Bob Kinlund family: Susie, Lane, and Bob, Lisa, Lori and Lynn.



John Haverland family: Joyce and John, Joey, Johnny, Jeff

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TO PERHAM  
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Wm. L. Hemmelgarn --- Vice President  
John J. Cavanagh ----- Cashier  
Mary E. Knuttila ----- Ass't Cashier

**D I R E C T O R S**

Wm. L. Hemmelgarn  
John J. Cavanagh  
William E. Lee

## CENTENNIAL BOOSTERS



From Hughes' Department Store — Back row: Walt and Bill Hughes; Ladies, left to right: Mary Ann Palubicki, Dora Bucholz, Martha Lehmkuhl, Dora Bucholz, Lucille Hughes and grand daughter, Krista.



From Hughes' Department Store — Left to right: Mary Ann Palubicki, Dora Bucholz, Martha Lehmkuhl, Dora Bucholz, Lucille Hughes and grand daughter, Krista.



From the "Sewing Basket" — Sally Richter, Janet Hendrickx, Thelma Boedigheimer.



From Perham Department Store — Left to right: Liz Laughlin, Myrtle Shamberger, Fran Pearce, and Helen Boedigheimer.



From Montgomery Ward's Store—Richard Defries

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Ervin and Martha Lehmkuhl



Lottie and Ernie Kollar



Mona and Rev. Ed Bittenbender



Mary and Jerry Balubicki



Herb and Joyce Guck

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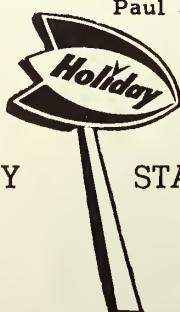
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Frank and Joan Bradshaw



Joyce and Ray Holten



Arilda and Walt Shasky



Ruth and Jalmer Knuttila



Walt and Lucille Hughes and Granddaughter Krista Hughes

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LUNCHES

MEALS

BEER



RICHLVLE, MINN.

# RICHVILLE



Richville Main Street — 1908

"Richville on the Soo, That's the Place for You," was a slogan chanted by young and old alike in the early years of the century in the little town. It was used in greeting next door neighbors as well as the newcomer.

Before the coming of the Soo Railroad, families from southern Minnesota, western Wisconsin and northern Iowa — as early as the 1880's — had come to this part of Otter Tail County, attracted by homestead lands, cheap state lands, and last but by no means least, the virgin woods. There was some game and of course the lakes furnished a supply of fish. The cordwood, railroad ties and pole material could be exchanged for groceries and other needed supplies, including feed for the horses which were a most important asset to get the wood products to market.

Perham, on the Northern Pacific, furnished a good market for the wood products, but it was a long day's journey over the primitive roads. It was mainly the cordwood that kept the wolf from the door.

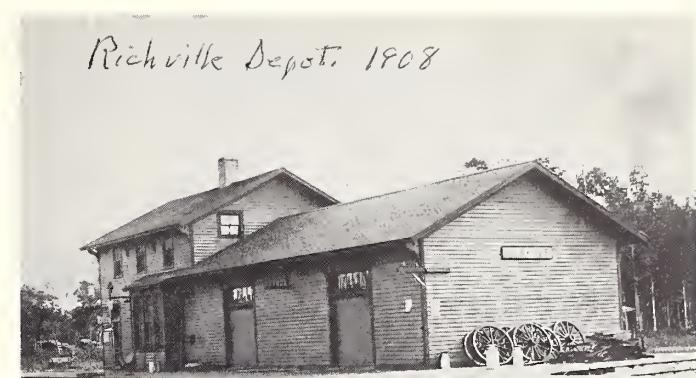
The first houses were mainly constructed of native logs, notched by hand, using a broad axe. This was a slow process but made better and warmer buildings.

Then in 1901 came the rumor — The Soo Line is going to build on up to Winnipeg. The rumor became a reality. Men with foresight gained access to maps of the proposed route the railroad would be taking and in 1902 action began. "Here is where she goes — here is where we make our fortunes — here is where we'll build our town. We've struck it rich!"

Whether or not this is where the village got the name of "Richville" is not known. However, no more authentic record has been found (by 1971) and the name still stands.

The first completed building was a two and a half story hotel, built a few rods from where the Soo Line tracks were laid out and close to where the depot was built. This was in 1902. Many other building sprang up.

The construction of the first hotel was in 1902. This was also a lasting business as it served as a hotel for over fifty years. It was torn down in 1960 and was then still in good condition. In the process of demolition, a workman recovered a lathing hatchet which was dropped from the third floor between the walls in the construction. Needless to say, after lying in the dark for sixty-eight years the hatchet now has a place of honor both with the workman and the family of the original owner.



Richville Depot — 1908

One of the original saloon buildings is still standing in 1971 — having been remodeled and additions added. It served for many years as a Royal Neighbor and Modern Woodmen Lodge hall. In 1971 it served as a warehouse. Yet another building originally used as a saloon became for some time the home of a Methodist minister.

In 1905 a new school district the 272nd in Otter Tail County, was formed, combining portions of District 240 and District 128. This was a semi-graded school, the building being constructed with two stories and employed two teachers.

In 1904 a group of United Brethren men set to work with the help of people of many, as well as people of no denominational connections, and built a church which functioned until 1908 as an E.U.B. Church. In 1908 it became a Methodist Episcopal and later a Methodist Church. In March 1953 the original building was destroyed by fire and a new building erected. In 1968, this became a United Methodist Church.

In 1925 a group of Missouri Synod Lutheran families formed the St. Paul's Lutheran congregation and built their church building in the village. The same year they laid out their own cemetery adjoining the village cemetery about a mile west of town. Both the village and the Lutheran church cemeteries were laid out when need arose. In both cases the first grave was for an infant; in the village cemetery a baby girl of four months in 1906, and in the Lutheran Church cemetery a baby boy of eight months in 1926.

Early Richville boasted several resident doctors, one even built a good sized building to serve as an office and hospital. Lack of nursing help, however, caused this venture to be short lived, and hospital cases mainly were taken to Perham.

Other early businesses included a drugstore and a newspaper, The Richville Leader, which also did custom printing, a funeral parlor and funeral director. Some very good blacksmiths kept shoes on the horses and sharpened plow lays as farmers cleared acreage. Livery stables with horses and carriages for hire were here until the auto made them useless. A shoe and harness repair shop came and went. A Farmer's State Bank served the area from 1908 until the early 20's. A lawyer's office and several barber shops served the area for short periods of time.

By 1908 the timber, which had brought a stave mill, a heading mill and a box factory, had begun to disappear.

Land owners turned to agriculture, including dairying. In 1911 a Farmers Co-op Creamery Ass'n was formed and continued until 1945.

In 1971 only two stores remain: The general store, of many departments, began its career in 1925; the other, a store offering used or second hand articles began in 1954.

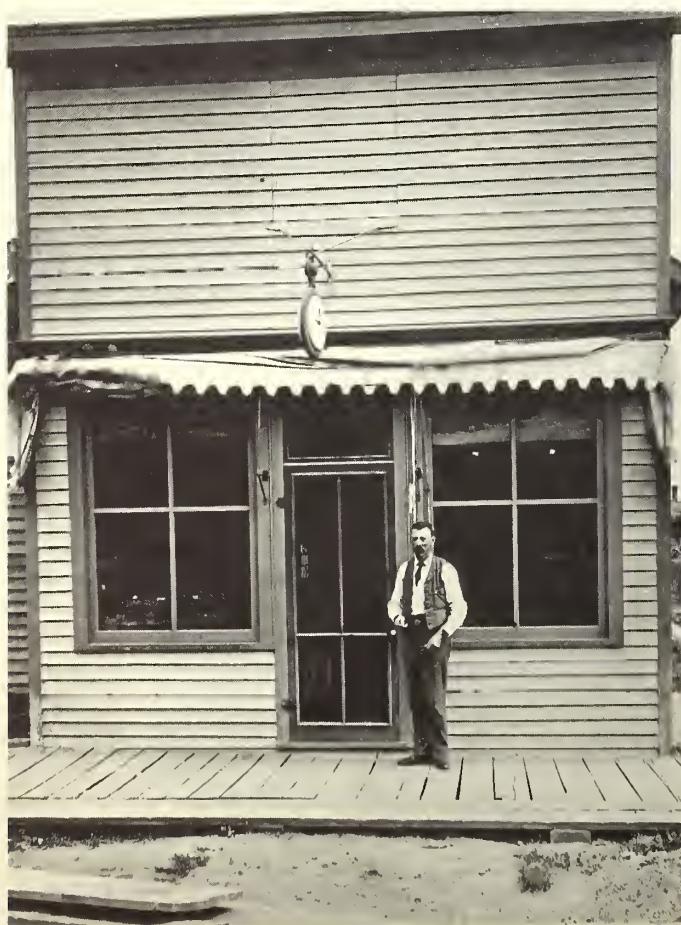
The town is still on the map. The natural resources — one of them, still, the trees, eight lakes with their bountiful supply of fish of various species — have again been of value to the town. It has in the past decade become both a summer and winter vacation land center, thanks again to Mother Nature. Thus the end of Richville has not yet come!



Paul Miller and his dad, Peter Miller, in the Miller Jewelry Store.



Art Nieman and Herman Nieman in his garage which stood where Hughes Clothing Store stands in 1971



Al Miller and his shop, Watchmaker and Jeweler. Formerly the first Post Office.



Paul Preuss Store in 1919. Right of door: Mrs. Paul Preuss and Dorothy, Evelyn Preuss Weickert, Cecilia Wilkowsky, who clerked for Paul for 25 years.



Paul Preuss Mercantile Store in 1922

# MUSIC IN THE OLD DAYS



Perham Band



Market Day in Perham, 1908. Perham Band Concert.



John, Stanley and Peter Bucholz



Old Bijou — 1914



Rush Lake Cornet Band



St. Henry's Church Choir — 1906



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## OLD TIMERS TODAY



Paul Miller, former mayor for 26 years. 87 years old.



John and George Burelbach



Left to right: Paul Miller, Bever Palzer, B. J. Lucking



Vince Drahmann



Old Settlers of Dora Township: Ernest Luebberman, Fred Luebberman, Mrs. Wm. (Lena) Seedorf, Herman Luebberman.

# OLD TIMERS TODAY



Anna and Pete Doll



Cal Mielke, "Mr. Richville"



Antoinette and Kathryn Walz in 1905



The Walz Twins today — Antoinette Wilke and Kathryn Hemmelgarn

---

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Paul LaFond, Photographer



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# OLD TIMERS at the Memorial Nursing Home



Standing: George Aldrich; Seated: Ewald Rosen, Sofia Sundberg.



Anna Mutschler, Joe Lachowitzer



Standing: Henry Brasel, Mary Mebust; Seated: Lena Brasel, Albert Belz.



Left to right: Ida Olson, Roal Carlson, Martin Schornack



Standing, left to right: Edwin Milbrandt, Margaret Lein, William Vought; Seated: Zilpha Smith.



Standing: Louis Quast, Blanche Bauer; Seated: George Strauch, Gertrude Jahn.



Standing, left to right: Rosalia Wilkowsky, Ella Wiese; Seated: Cecelia Wilkowsky.



Standing: Margaret Detlein, Bert Suhring; Seated: Tina Kerlin.



Standing, left to right: August Deneffe, Charles Harrington; Seated, left to right: Eleanor Kjorlien, Agnes Romann



Standing, left to right: Albert Lenius, Amelia Ogruske, August Wilkowsky; Seated: Agartha Lenius.



Standing: Francis Baumgartner, Ethel Lillis, Stanley Buchholz; Seated: Matt Winkels



Standing, left to right: Mary Helmrichs, Louis Karsnia, Helen Fistler; Seated: Clara Quincer, Martha Niebergall.



Left to right: Veronica Jendritza, Ruth Esser, Theresa Meyer.

Some other Old Timers not pictured are: Louisa Krueger, Mary Sackett, Martha Belka, Catherine Szapiewski

## Old Timers at St. James Home - 1971



Standing, left to right: Mary Helmberger, Ed Bahls, Sophia Stodolka; Seated, Effie Maude Crosby



Left to right: Martha Meyer, Ida Trettel, Louis Trettel, Marie Altman



Carl Hinz and friends



Back, left to right . . . Charles Beighley, Albert Bierwagen.  
Front, left to right . . . Catherine Breunig, Minnie Martin.



Left to right: Marie Berns, Louise Lattman, Mary Moore



Standing, left to right . . . August Schuessler, Leonita Edmunds, Herb Stenberg; Seated . . . Grace Feyereisen

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Gustav Morganroth, Pioneer  
Settler, Teacher and Indian In-  
interpreter



Leo Schroeder, Brewmaster's Son



Nick Jahn, photographer and painter



George Young, Past Postmaster of  
Perham



Leo Drahmann



Jim Shea, Banker



Vincent H. Drahmann



Mrs. Martin Shea, Mother of Jim Shea, owner of Merchants Hotel



M. J. Daly



Clara Kemper Young



Micheal Walz, 1907. Was State Rep. of Otter Tail 4 years.



Judge Shannon

## OLD SETTLERS

Martin Sr.



Bernard A.



Alphonse W.



Martin J.



Schoenebergers was founded by Martin Schoeneberger, one of the original Rush Lake settlers. Martin homesteaded in Otto township in 1867. He established the original furniture store in Perham in 1878. Martin was a skilled carpenter and coffin-maker. The original store adjoined his home which is now the H. C. Brase residence. He was succeeded by his son Bernard A. in 1904.

Bernard A. Schoeneberger purchased the present main street location in 1913. He expanded the business, added the present funeral chapel in 1941. Bernard A. died in the same year in which the chapel was completed. It was during his years in the business that we passed from the horse-drawn hearse to the modern funeral car, from the wake in the home to the funeral chapel.

Al and Martin Schoeneberger bought the business from their father Bernard in 1940. They operated it as a partnership until Al was forced to retire because of ill health. Al died in 1968. During the time the partnership operated the business a large addition was added to the furniture store. This enabled them to greatly expand the home furnishings part of the business. Complete home furnishings service has always been their aim.

FOR BETTER VALUE FOR YOUR DOLLAR  
**SCHOENEBERGERS**

Established 1878



Amos Marckel



Mr. and Mrs. George Shelske and Mrs. Eva Tober, Great Great Grandmothers of Mrs. Henry A. Fiedler — 1874



Adolph Rasmussen



Mrs. John Esser

## OLD SETTLERS



Henry Sieling (Laura's husband)



Hortense Friedman, Ambulance Driver during World War I



M. J. (Mike) Gans



Mrs. Mike Gans



Dr. Ben Esser in his office (Dental)



Christ Ebeling Family

## OTHER PROMINENT OLD SETTLERS

Space did not allow the printing of many beautiful photos of old Pioneers and Early Settlers. Following is a list of names of some families who took out homestead Patents in the 1860's and 70's and a few in the 80's. Many of these were from Perham and Otto Townships and the general Perham area.

Matt Burelbach  
Jacob Doll  
Andrew Stewart  
Noah Flatlow  
Joseph Albrecht  
John Stenebach  
Johan Harkowski  
Clemence Steinbach  
A. Bende  
Sebastian Hertel  
B. Boedigheimer  
Peter Lindall  
John Drahmann  
Vincent Drahmann  
Theodore Esser  
B. A. Lucking  
Amos Marckel  
Clarence Mielke  
Martin Schoeneberger  
Henry Seiling  
Harvey D. Smalley, Jr.  
Harvey Daniel Smalley, Sr.  
Peter Doll  
Oswald  
Josephine Miller  
John Miller  
Albert Miller  
B. A. Schoeneberger  
Dr. Josiah S. Richardson  
Theodore Matz, Sr.  
Martin Krauss  
Mr. Tiedjen  
Ludger Berry  
George Reeder  
George Feidler  
Matt Olson  
Herman Huseby  
Ole Ike

Milton Hobert Willman  
Andrew P. Holm  
Joe Frisch  
Provost  
Anna Rasmussen  
Ernest Pelton  
George Altstadt  
S. Peterson  
Henry Tomhave  
C. B. Soule  
Virgil Herm  
Mike Doll  
Dan Flynn  
Fred Mutshler  
Martin Shea  
Henry Kemper  
John Gratzek (Mrs. Gratzek  
was first child born in  
Village of Perham)  
Ferdinand Boedigheimer  
John Paschke  
George Young  
Leo Doll  
W. A. Doll (Wendall)  
Steve Butler  
Mohr  
George Seifert  
Margaret Hassler  
Fred Schultz  
Dan Gorman  
Frank Staab  
John Karsnia  
Mary Keidel  
Charles Weis  
Mrs. John Frisch (First  
white woman to settle on  
Perham prairie — 1869)  
John Humer  
Carso Crane

Isaih Faries  
August Ludoksky  
Heinrich Grismar  
Blasie Hassler  
Frank Veox,  
Valentine Viox  
Susanna Kopp  
Cathrin Rusch  
Lorenz Rusch  
Frederich Mohr  
John Kahler  
Sophie Santebin  
Helvig Happel  
John Kahler  
Frederick Bauck  
Peter Mohr  
Frederick Hass  
Louise Schroeder  
Wm. Husen  
Joseph Hassler  
John Wernecke  
Henry Geitman  
John Rock  
Charlotte Grunert  
Abraham B. Baylis  
Andreas Dietlein  
George Riter  
Adam Gerber  
Victor Scheideiger  
Martin Fiedler  
Florian Fehr  
Louis Sarbacker  
Wendelin Fehrenbacher  
Anton Friedsam  
Charles Flotz  
Joseph W. Doll  
Joseph Veis  
Ferdinand Eifert  
Victor Eifert

# DAYS OF YORE



John Kukowske, Sr.'s. Hardware Store, now Bretz' Hdwe.



Mixing cement for the Drahmann potato warehouse about 1915. Where Tuffy's now stands.



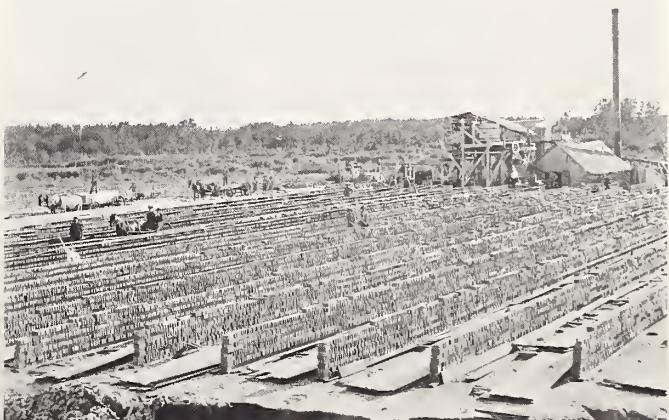
Schmidt Foundry — 1917



Located where the Happy Hours Pool Hall is now



Ben Schoenberger and George Burlebach in the interior of Schoenberger's Furniture Store — early 1920's



Martin Hauf & Son Northwestern Brick Yard

PATRON LISTING

RUDYS SHOE SHOP

LORRAINES SALON OF BEAUTY

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VERA'S BEAUTY SHOP

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Clarence Boedigheimer      Alma Herrmann  
Secretary                      Secretary

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# ORGANIZATIONS

## VETERANS OF WORLD WAR I — BARRACKS NO. 2127

Chartered April 4, 1960. Walter Olson was first Commander. Forty-five members signed the charter. Due to 27 deaths, there are only 18 members in 1971. Gust Rosen is present Commander.

## LADIES AUXILIARY TO VETERANS OF W.W. I BARRACKS NO. 2127

Organized April 28, 1964, with Sadie Paulsen as first President. Evelyn Costanzo is the present President.

## MASONIC LODGE NO. 157

Charter Jan. 16, 1884. Present Worshipful Master, Herbert Gerlach, Dent. Minn.



Masonic Lodge in the "Old Days"



John Knight and Boy Scouts of Troop 321



Birach Shrine Club

## LONGFELLOW REBEKAH LODGE NO. 164

Chartered March 6, 1897, with 30 members signing. Present Nobel Grand is Verona Larson. Fifteen members, two holding memberships of over fifty years, Della Lotterer and Charlotte McGibbon Bagley.

## EASTERN STAR, CLEOPATRA CHAPTER NO. 124

Chartered May 12, 1898. First Worthy Matron, Lillian Poppler. Present Worthy Matron, Mrs. Shirley Carlson, New York Mills, Minn.

## V.F.W. POST NO. 4020

Organized Jan. 14, 1945. First Commander, Charles Fowler. Present Commander, Pete Wientjes.

## V.F.W. AUXILIARY POST NO. 4020

Chartered Aug. 8, 1945. Present President, Dora Wientjes. First President was Alvina Nelson.



Modern Woodman of America about 1900

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# PERHAM MAYORS

1881 to 1883	Henry Kemper
1883 to 1887	Martin Shea
1887 to 1888	Hugh Kelly
1888 to 1890	Peter Jung
1890 to 1891	Peter Jung
1891 to 1892	Richard Jung
1892 to 1893	Martin Shea
1893 to 1894	John B. Drahmann
1894 to 1895	Louis Struett
1895 to 1897	Charles Schroeder
1897 to 1899	Peter Schroeder
1899 to 1900	Amos Marckel
1900 to —	Peter Schroeder
	Fred Bauck
	Fred Zeller
1949 to 1952	Paul Miller
1952 to 1956	Norb Ebnet
1956 to 1961	Paul Miller
1961 to 1970	Royal Arvig
1970 to —	Ernest P. Kollar



Clarence Boedigheimer  
Postmaster - 1971



City Hall built in 1902 shows the jail on left



Perham Police  
Left to Right . . . Jim Kyte, Hank Lubitz, Virgil McGowan



Arc Lights for Street Lights - 1912



Village Maintenance Department  
Leo Rothiger, Frank Sczygiel, George "Shorty" Paul

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Perham

# MEMORIES OF AN OLD-TIMER

John Burelbach, June 1971

(He is 85 years old. His memory goes back to age 4 or 5)

When the first locomotive came through Perham it looked like the J. I. Case threshing engine, having a hood on and stack with spark arrester. Wood was the fuel used at this time and the railroad company had cord wood piles along the track from which they could replenish their stock. The Northern Pacific tracks in this area were and are maintained by the section crews and prove to be one of the smoothest in the United States.

In these days oxen were used more than horses and rarely the yoke of oxen got stalled in mud or snow, whereas a team of horses did. Never seen the driver have any lines on a yoke of oxen — he just hollered "Gee" or "Haw." I often wondered what he did when he wanted them to stop.



Math Burelbach Wagon Repair and Blacksmith Shop. Stood where the Lux Theater stands.

When Math Burelbach came from Germany, where he had made his apprenticeship as wagon and carriage maker, he built a two story building where now stands the Lux Theater. To the south was Robert Burget's Blacksmith Shop. As recent as 1960 when a wagon was in Perham, I



John J. Burelbach, 85 years old

noticed that on the rear axle was stenciled, Burget and Burelbach.

John tells us of his many happy days in Perham with his father, mother and brothers, and his many years' association with the Perham people during his working days at the hospital, etc. He recalls many "firsts" in Perham and during his reminiscing goes back many times to his family.

He tells us of Matthew Burlebach, his father, born in 1858 in Germany, and coming to Perham in 1878. He worked in a wood-working shop where the Lux Theater now stands.

He married Sophia Doll in 1884. Sophia was born in 1863 and arrived in Rush Lake from Fort Recovery, Ohio, in 1878. Five boys were born to them: Martin, Major in World War I, died in 1950. He is buried at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia; George, Eddie (passed away while an infant), and Nick was killed in World War I and is buried in Argonne Cemetery in France. John and George are still living in Perham today and John has contributed much of the "old day" memories to Perham residents. These two gentlemen are indeed true Perham Pioneers.

## "Oxen Didn't Understand German"

In 1869, Louis Struett, who later was one of Perham's principal merchants, homesteaded in Pine Lake Township, joining the Gustav Morgenroth homestead. Mr. Struett was not accustomed to farm labor, having been brought up in the city in the merchant tailor business. Farming was uphill business for him.

He had a fine pair of cattle, but somehow the beasts would never go when Louis wanted to go. They had it pretty much their own way. This was principally due to the fact that he spoke German to them such as Hott, Bist and Br-r-r, instead of Gee, Haw and Back. One day several of his friends met him rambling on the prairie with his team. When asked where he was going, he replied, "I do not know, my oxen could give you better information."

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1917**

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## Some of the Early Resorts in the Area

Babe's Resort is the oldest resort in the area; the Grand View Heights was shortly after, but on Big Pine Lake. It housed the resorters with room and board in their big Hotel. It is now owned by Hugh Kabrich.

Evergreen Beach on Big Pine Lake began with Herman and Mae Heidorn when they bought the farm from Oscar Hanson in 1924 and ran it as rental cabins until the 40's when George and Ora Prall bought it. They ran it until several years ago and sold part of it because their health was not too good.

Leonard's Resort began in 1974 when he bought a tract of land and built a cabin on it. He built picnic tables and a recreation area. Leonard's dock has become a popular place to fish. Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Saewert and family have worked hard to make their resort a most attractive and popular place.

Sadie and Joe Biltz established SunSet Beach on Big Pine Lake also in the forties. They have a nice resort with cabins, boats and a store. It is located near Squaw Point.



The Old Boat House, Little Pine inlet, now Babes

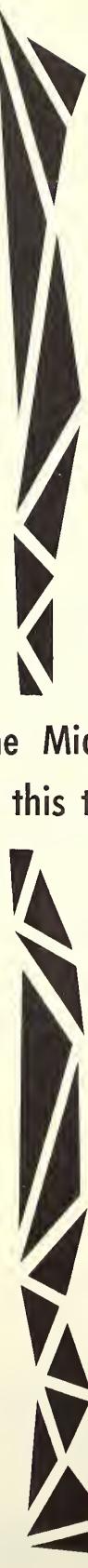


Paul Miller and Fish.



Math Burelbach about 70 years old, in 1930, enjoying hunting.





BEST WISHES TO THE

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## MORE "DAYS ON THE FARM"



Farm Scene of Leander Boedigheimer, Rush Lake. Threshing machine on right is run by "horse power" on the left. In distance is seen St. Lawrence Church, and to the left of the church is the post office (Building closest to the farm buildings in foreground).



A team of Oxen



T. J. Delaney with his field of shocks, about 1925



Putting hay in the barn on the Christ Ebeling farm, where Alan Rusche now lives.



Wm. E. Delaney in 1920 getting the wood supply ready for winter use.



Hauling brick from the old brick yard.



Martin Haut Old Homestead — House is still standing.



The former Reider Post Office which was located on the farm now owned by T. V. Delaney in Rush Lake Township.



Four horses with binder cutting grain. Driver is Joe Dulski

# FROM THE OLD FAMILY ALBUM



Martha and Emil Ebeling, Fred and Tille Brending, Herman and Alvina Ebeling.



Unknown, Alvina Nelson, Paul Miller and Al Nelson



Louise Miller



Jack Sawyer, Al Henn and Mr. Shannon with hunting dogs and prairie chickens shot on Perham Prairie about 1902.



Bernard Kemper and Son.



John Rick farm home in Gorman Township



Henry A. Fiedler's Grandfather



Paul Miller in his Jewelry Shop in the 1940's



Albert Shasky, 2nd from left, standing on the dam at the outlet of Little Pine Lake.



Gobirsch (Chas. Miller) Residence, now owned by Haremza



Norb Shasky, Russ Bordson, Al Stoll and Paul Miller counting pennies so Norb Shasky could pay for his beer license.



Perham Public School — 1915



Mr. and Mrs. William Ebeling



Cast of a play given at St. Joe about 1905



Brothers and sisters: Joseph Weis, Jochim Weis, John Weis, Mary Eifert, and Catherine Doll.



Family of Math Lepak, taken at the August Renowski homestead, where Larry Lange now lives.



Martin Schoenberger Family. Right to left: Ben, Martin, Ida, Elizabeth and Mathilda.



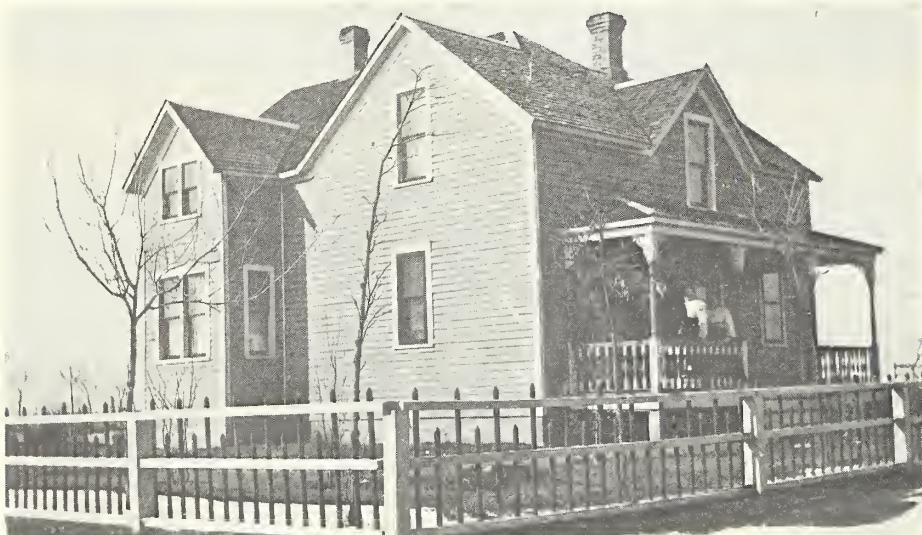
The family of Ludger Berry about 1916



Mr. and Mrs. John A. (Maria Freidman) Doll. Standing, left to right: Wendalin L., Anton W. (now 86), and Bernard (Died World War I).



Nathaniel McConachie and John Oswald



Simon Wilkowski home in Perham, taken in 1911. It was torn down in 1924 and replaced by the house Xavier Walz now resides in.

## Centennial Autographs

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The history of Perham, and the northeastern part of Otter Tail County, is the history of progress. The hardships of the early pioneers were beyond description. They encountered, with no capital but their empty hands and honest hearts, every hardship known to man. They contested the ground with wild beasts and wild man; risked their lives and the lives of their families. They reduced the forests into fields of beauty and fruitful production. They built school houses and churches near them, where education and Christianity, like related twins, may grow and prosper together. We are proud to have been a part of the planning of this publication and hope it meets with your approval.

CULBERT - SWAN PRODUCTIONS

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For the Historical Facts in this publication, we are indebted to the Pioneers, Henry Kempfer and E. A. Pelton, and many others who kept a record of all events in the community. Much of the contents of this book has excerpts of their writings.

We are also greatly indebted to John Burelbach, Eloise Oswald, Jim Daly and many others.

I wish to thank especially all the people in Perham who helped gather and assemble old photos and material for this book.

Because of limited space, all of the wonderful historical pictures could not be printed and it is my earnest desire that all of you will be pleased with our efforts.

VERONA LARSON

1871 - 1971

## YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY, PERHAM!



Original Hoot Lake  
1,000 KW hydroelectric  
structure on the Otter  
Tail River near Fergus  
Falls, 1912.

Artist's conception of the \$100 million 400,000-kilowatt generating plant to be constructed near Big Stone, South Dakota.



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POWER COMPANY

District Office — Fergus Falls, Minnesota

The

**PERHAM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

**CONGRATULATES PERHAM**

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**OF THE COMING OF THE**

**RAILROAD TO THIS VILLAGE**

WE ARE HAPPY TO HAVE SPEARHEADED THIS MEMORABLE OCCASION AND LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUED ASSOCIATION WITH THE PROGRESS OF THIS AREA.

**Larry McKinley, President**

**Frank Hammer, Vice President**

**Don Seifert, Secretary-Treasurer**